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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**JAPAN'S MODERN SECURITY POLICY TRAJECTORY:
POST-COLD WAR EXPLANATIONS
AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS**

by

John T. Bridgeman

December 2020

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Robert J. Weiner
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POST-COLD WAR EXPLANATIONS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(FAR EAST, SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC)**

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This thesis explores three aspects of post–Cold War Japanese security policy development. First, what significant security policy changes have occurred between 1989 and 2020? Second, what were the underlying factors that created the observed policy outcome? Third, how durable do those factors appear to be in 2020 and beyond? This thesis concludes with an assessment of Japan’s probable future security policy trajectory, based upon the answers to the three foregoing questions.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARDB	Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade
CMF	Combined Maritime Force
CSD	collective self defense
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
ICBM	inter-continental ballistic missile
JSDF	Japan Self Defense Force
JMSDF	Japan Maritime Self Defense Force
JGSDF	Japan Ground Self Defense Force
JASDF	Japan Air Self Defense Force
JCG	Japan Coast Guard
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MIRV	multiple independent reentry vehicle
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NDPG	National Defense Program Guidelines
PAP	People's Armed Police
PKO	peace keeping operation
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAA	People's Liberation Army Air
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
PLANMC	People's Liberation Army Navy Marine Corps
TTW	territorial waters

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis intends to evaluate three related questions concerning contemporary Japan's security policy development. First, over the past 31 years, how can the interaction between external and internal factors explain the security policy decisions that have expanded the international role of Japan's military and the conditions under which use of force may be considered? Second, has the overall security policy trajectory from 1989 to 2020 vectored toward remilitarization, or have the developments been only surface-level, leaving intact Japan's antiwar status quo? Finally, how durable are the factors driving the current trajectory? The largest portion of this thesis, by volume, will focus on the first question by identifying and assessing the relative causal strength of external foreign factors vice domestic political factors upon Japan's aforementioned security policy trajectory. However, the purpose of that exploration is to support the broader focus of this thesis, which is to develop an assessment of the vector and endurance of Japan's contemporary security policy trajectory.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Japan is widely regarded by United States policymakers as an essential ally to the United States within the Indo-Pacific Area of Operations.¹ This is overtly stated by the Commander of U.S. Forces Japan's current mission statement: "The US–Japan Alliance is the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and freedom in the Indo-Pacific region."² However, one need not rely on political rhetoric to confirm this, as from a military perspective alone the United States permanently stations more military power in Japan than anywhere else in the world outside of U.S. borders. 54,000 U.S. military uniformed personnel, including the US' only forward deployed aircraft carrier, are present in Japan. As non-allied powers like

¹ Commander, U.S. Forces Japan, "About USFJ," USFJ, accessed March 19, 2020, <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>.

² Commander, U.S. Forces Japan.

China grow in economic strength and military capacity, the capabilities of Japan's military and the conditions under which Japan would consider use of force should be of great interest to policymakers and scholars alike.

Despite having developed a military that is regarded in 2020 as being the fifth most powerful in the world, Japan is unique among all similarly ranked world powers for not having fired a shot in anger since the end of World War II.³ A sudden change to Japanese rules on use of force could therefore have an outsized destabilizing impact on regional security. By assessing the interactions between causal factors underlying Japan's security policy development and defining its current trajectory, this thesis may determine a suite of policy-relevant assessments. First, it will help policymakers to set realistic expectations for further developments of the U.S.-Japan military alliance. Questions as to the conditions under which Japan is willing to use military force in support of United States' assets are essential to answer whether the U.S. is to develop accurate policy for the region. Second, it will help to determine the conditions under which Japan is likely to consider the unilateral use of military force to defend its own interests. Third, Japan's security policy trajectory has implications for those studying regional balance of power and issues pertaining to other states' perceptions of Japan's military status. If Japan eventually demonstrates a willingness and capability to use military force to resolve disputes, it could result in increased regional hostility towards Japan and decreased willingness for other regional powers to partner with Japan. On the other hand, a more force-assertive Japan would provide greater strength to the U.S.-Japan security block in attempts to deter Chinese expansionist behavior.

This thesis will contribute to the current discourse by examining Japan's security policy trajectory of the period, by examining the driving-factor relationships that could have plausibly driven it along such a trajectory, and finally by making an assessment of likely future trajectories based upon the durability of the factors that drove it to this point. The existing discourse is focused on two long-standing debates. The first asks whether

³ Global Firepower, "2020 Japan Military Strength," March 7, 2020, https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=japan.

Japan's security policy can be broadly characterized as holding to the status quo of antimilitary norms or as militarization. This thesis will define status quo as meaning that Japan continues to embrace pacifist policy and rejects a trajectory towards the offensive use of force. This thesis will define militarization as a security policy trajectory that is moving towards a state of capability and willingness to use military force in order to achieve state foreign policy objectives beyond unilateral self-defense. The second asks whether Japan's security policy is driven primarily by external factors, internal factors, or some kind of relationship between the two. Some theorists argue that Japan has undergone a remilitarization or security renaissance throughout the period under examination, while others maintain Japan has largely held to its antiwar norms and there is no indication of a substantive shift away from Japan's traditional antiwar strategy. Japan remains outspokenly opposed to the use of force for anything other purpose than self-defense, but the status quo arguments do not satisfactorily explain how Japan has incrementally redefined its interpretation of self-defense. Nor do they explain Japan's increasingly offensive-oriented military capabilities. Further exploration is warranted to understand how Japanese security policy has meaningfully developed while preserving a dedication to principles of self-defense.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

The past two decades have produced a rich discourse on the subject of Japan's security policy, with an especially keen focus on the capabilities and authorities of the JSDF. The discourse has been accompanied by a rapidly changing international security environment for Japan, which has brought commensurate changes to Japan's security policy. As such, extant literature on the subject must be viewed as a product of the time it was written. Contributions that were made to the discourse shortly after the millennium, such as Green's 2003 *Reluctant Realism* argument, offer insightful analysis of the underlying factors, but are hampered by a lack of awareness regarding issues that were

only just emerging at the time or had not yet occurred (for example, China's resurgence and the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake, respectively).⁴

There are wide areas of consensus within the scholarly discourse surrounding Japan's security policy development. However, the areas of debate are the focus of this thesis, and so the areas of consensus will receive only a cursory explanation here. It is widely acknowledged that significant security policy change has occurred over the past two decades. Development of new military technological capabilities, acquisition of new military platforms, greater participation in US-led coalitions, and the reinterpretation of Japan's constitution Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense (CSD) are agreed upon by a diverse range of scholars, such as Smith, Midford, and Oros, as significant changes to the security policies that had remained relatively stable for the preceding half century.⁵

Despite the wide consensus that security policy change has occurred, the causes and long-term implications of those changes remain a hotly debated area of the discourse. Oros is firmly of the opinion that Japan has undergone a "security renaissance," while Takao and Lam argue that the security developments of the post-Cold War period do not demonstrate a break from previous security policy.⁶ Smith and Midford take the middle ground on this issue by arguing that the post-Cold War Japanese military buildup is noteworthy and a significant change from the previous status quo, but do not go so far as to say that such developments represent a fundamental change from previous security policy.⁷

⁴ See Michael J. Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

⁵ See Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power*, A Council on Foreign Relations Book (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2019); Paul Midford, "A Strategy for Overcoming Defensive Defense: How Can Japan Achieve Security," *Senshu Bōei Kokufuku No Senryaku: Nihon No Anzenhoshō o Dō Toraeru Ka*. 18, no. 1 (Winter 2015): 112–15, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyu040>; see Andrew Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance: New Policies and Politics for the Twenty-First-Century*, Contemporary Asia in the World (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).

⁶ See Yasuo Takao, "Democratic Representation in Japanese Defense Spending: Does Public Sentiment Really Matter?," *Asian Social Science* 7, no. 3 (February 28, 2011): p3, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n3p3>; see Peng Er Lam, *Japan's Peace-Building Diplomacy in Asia: Seeking a More Active Political Role* (Routledge, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203877814>.

⁷ See Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019.

1. Causal Factors of Japan's Security Policy Change

The scholarly debate emerges in assessing the causal factors and long-term implications of the security policy changes that have occurred. In the first area of debate, there is disagreement regarding the extent to which Japan's security policy development is driven by external or internal factors. Some scholars, like Smith and Oros, argue that Japan's security policy changes are primarily a reaction to emerging external threats from a remilitarized China and a nuclearized North Korea.⁸ Smith asserts that Japan's contemporary security policy changes have been primarily driven by three broadly-accepted external factors: Chinese naval development and territorial claims, North Korean ballistic missile development, and calls from U.S. leaders for Japan to directly participate with its military in international coalition missions. Oros takes a more nuanced position on the effects of U.S. presence in Japan. In part, he agrees with Smith that the U.S. has, especially in the past decade, encouraged Japanese military development. However, he raises the point that the U.S. presence in Japan has also exacerbated antimilitarist sentiments from the Japanese left and blunted the need for Japan to create its own self-sufficient forces due to the continuous presence of U.S. armed forces within Japan.⁹

Midford and Takao argue that Japan's security policy is primarily driven by domestic pressures such as social norms, historical perceptions, and future national ambitions.¹⁰ Midford presents the most mainstream view of this camp: that Japan's antiwar norms continue to exert a limiting effect upon Japanese security policy development but have gradually eroded in the post-Cold War period. Takao takes a more radical approach, and outright disagrees with Smith, by arguing that Japanese security policy has been and continues to be primarily driven by underlying domestic social norms that reject militarization. As a result, he argues, military development has been significantly

⁸ See Smith.

⁹ See Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 2019.

¹⁰ See Robert D Eldridge and Paul Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War on Terrorism*, 2008, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1172214>; Yasuo Takao, "Democratic Representation in Japanese Defense Spending: Does Public Sentiment Really Matter?," *Asian Social Science* 7, no. 3 (February 28, 2011): p3, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n3p3>.

constrained. His primary assertions have been challenged by Japan's security policy development over the past decade, as can be seen by the JSDF's deployment of forces to participate in US-led coalition efforts, reinterpretation of Article 9 to allow for CSD and acquisition of offensive capabilities such as ship-launched F-35 fighters. All these decisions reflect a more powerful driving force opposite to pacifist social norms.

Suzuki and Wallace adopt of position that finds common ground between those arguing in favor of external versus internal factor influence.¹¹ They premise their argument on the basis that external factors like China, North Korea, and the United States exert considerable pressure on Japanese security policy, but this research has not seen a commensurate balancing effort on Japan to address the vulnerabilities. The answer, they argue, lies in Japan's unique internal factor of a domestic distrust for Japanese revisionists. Security policy development is linked to the revisionists that have historically championed the cause, and so the domestic distrust is transferred to security policy development more generally. Suzuki and Wallace offer a compelling exploration of the predominant distaste for revisionist social platforms within Japan, and how that distaste colors Japanese domestic perception of revisionist-driven security reforms. Ultimately, they conclude that there is appetite in Japanese domestic politics for some level of security policy development and constitutional reform, but that inherent distrust for the underlying motives of the revisionists prevents more significant changes from occurring.

A related question arises within the literature: to what degree are Japanese political leadership's decisions a dependent outcome of internal and external factor influences that coalesce into political outcomes, and to what degree can the political decision-making outcomes be attributed to individual political actor objectives and biases? Despite the underlying antiwar norms within Japanese society, it cannot be ignored that the Japanese state government, by definition an internal entity, has been responsible for directing and ratifying the policy that has redefined the boundaries of action that Japan's military is

¹¹ Shogo Suzuki and Corey Wallace, "Explaining Japan's Response to Geopolitical Vulnerability," *International Affairs* 94, no. 4 (2018): 726–27, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iyy033>.

willing and capable of taking on. Much of that policy change has been made in the face of outspoken opposition from the Japanese public.

Many analysts argue that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has had an outsized role in driving Japanese security policy development, and there is significant debate over the extent of his influence and the personal motivations behind his decisions. Hughes directly asserts that Abe's nationalistic beliefs have come to dominate the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and, by proxy, Japanese security policy as a whole.¹² This dominance, he asserts, has broken down traditional Japanese government positions that favored non-committal security policy hedging to avoid being drawn into undesirable US-led security commitments. According to Hughes, Abe's presence has driven Japanese security policy change in ways that cannot be explained by external factor influences alone. Oros disagrees by arguing that Japan's security policy outcomes have little to do with the individuals in power, and instead argues that Japan's post-2012 security policy trajectory would have been largely the same with or without Prime Minister Abe's return to power.¹³ Glosserman acknowledges that Prime Minister Abe's post-2012 security policies were believed to serve the national interest, but diverges from Oros by arguing that Abe's conservative ideological goals have skewed his perception of what the national interest is.¹⁴ Therefore, he argues, Abe's presence has had a measurable impact on Japanese security policy outcomes. This thesis will take a position adjacent to Hughes and Glosserman, arguing that Abe's current dominance over the Japanese government has given him limited latitude to push the needle toward policy solutions that favor response to international pressures while remaining within the normative boundaries that domestic pressures will allow.

¹² Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Strategic Trajectory and Collective Self-Defense: Essential Continuity or Radical Shift?," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 43, no. 1 (February 1, 2017): 93–126, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jjs.2017.0005>.

¹³ Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 2019, 104.

¹⁴ Brad Glosserman, *Peak Japan The End of Great Ambitions*, Book Collections on Project MUSE. (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 181–82.

2. Trajectory and Implications of Japan's Security Policy Change

The second area of debate concerns the trajectory and implications of these incremental policy changes for long-term security policy shift. The literature on the assessed trajectory of Japan's security policy can be divided into two schools of thought: "status quo" and "militarization." Some, like Hughes and Oros, argue that Japan is taking meaningful steps towards remilitarization.¹⁵ Both authors hinge their assertions on the premise that the gradual erosion of domestic antiwar social norms has opened the door to public consideration of looser constraints over the use of force. Midford takes a middle approach by arguing that the Japanese public is still fundamentally antiwar but is moving away from anti-militarism and toward defensive realism. His argument is based upon extensive polling data that indicates this public opinion shift over time. Takao argues that Japan ultimately maintains the status quo as an anti-militarist state despite surface-level adjustments that have been made to modernize the JSDF. He bases his argument on the long-standing Japanese public opposition to increases in defense spending.

The militarization camp, most notably inhabited by Hughes and Oros, argues that Japan has been on a trajectory of militarization over the past two decades and appears to be headed towards an end-state of willingness to use the JSDF for aggressive deterrence and conflict resolution. This position points to Japan's development and acquisition of sophisticated military technologies, development of potentially offensive military capabilities, and the adoption of more assertive security policies as indicators of their position.

The "status quo" camp holds that Japan has not meaningfully altered its dedication to pacifist security policy since the end of World War II. The arguments within this camp rely on Japanese public opinion, election results, constitutional frameworks, and ongoing peaceful policy as indicators that validate their position. Its major proponents include

¹⁵ Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Re-Emergence as a 'Normal' Military Power," *The Adelphi Papers* 44, no. 368–369 (November 1, 2004): 139–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/05679320412331340377>; Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 2019.

Midford, Eldridge, Takao, and Lam.¹⁶ Midford argues that the Japanese public has traditionally harbored deep-seated concerns over the civilian government's ability to control the military. However, he acknowledges that Japanese policy and public opinion has gradually shifted toward a "defensive realist" belief in the necessity and efficacy of deterrence towards China and North Korea. The long-term policy implications of Takao's previously discussed argument also rest squarely in the status quo camp. Lam argues that, on a policy level, Japan has not changed course from its Cold War strategy of influencing regional outcomes using peaceful means. He rejects the idea that Japan's military capability development is reflective of a policy shift towards offensive military policy.

The counterposed "militarization" camp argues that Japan has meaningfully altered both its military capabilities and its willingness to use those forces in pursuit of foreign policy objectives. Green, Hughes, and Oros make up the highest profile names in this camp (among primarily-English-language analysts). Hughes and Oros take the strongest stance, arguing that the underlying pacifist norms of Japan are eroding and Japan is moving towards becoming a country that is willing to use force to achieve its policy objectives. Oros refers to a "security renaissance" ongoing within Japan's domestic political discourse. He agrees with Smith that the security renaissance is being driven by external threats to Japan's security, but his narrative goes further. He argues that the external factors are driving a shift in underlying Japanese social norms towards accepting the use of force as a potential solution to international disagreements. Green offers a similar approach with a more reserved assessment. He argues that the Japanese state has been forced by external factors to adopt a "reluctant realism" policy, in which the use of force must be considered as an option, even if a domestically distasteful one due to underlying pacifist norms.¹⁷

There are also significant contributors to the conversation that fall outside of the two larger camps. Smith approaches this topic tepidly. She focuses on the substantive security policy changes that have occurred since the end of World War II and draws connections between those changes and external threats that have driven the policy shift.

¹⁶ See Lam, *Japan's Peace-Building Diplomacy in Asia*.

¹⁷ Michael J. Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 8.

She takes the firm position that Japan has rearmed and wants its adversaries to believe that it will use military force if pressed upon. However, Smith leaves open whether Japan will actually choose to fight when push comes to shove. Hiscock rejects the possibility of a complete militarization of the JSDF as politically untenable, and instead posits the existence of a “dynamic status quo.”¹⁸ He argues that existing pacifist social norms are strong enough to hold back security policy development from reaching complete militarization, but not strong enough to prevent incremental security policy changes that are deemed necessary to protect state interests.

Outside of academic literature, Japan’s Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) offer a narrative that appears to support the above arguments of “militarization” proponents. In its opening passages, it states that “Japan’s defense capability is the ultimate guarantor of its security,” which suggests an emphasis on, rather than begrudging acceptance of, the Japanese military’s role in providing for the security of the Japanese state.¹⁹ The public affirmation of the military’s preeminent security role is a departure from the Fiscal Year 2014 NDPG, which contained no such declarative language and focused on Japan’s more traditional roles as a non-combatant contributor to regional and global security.²⁰ The language used in the Fiscal Year 2019 NDPG maintains Japan’s long-standing commitment to “exclusively defense-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses threat to other countries,” but the added language is a noteworthy change from traditional post-war attitudes that the military was a dangerous tool to be minimized.²¹ Today, the JSDF serves a prominent role as the publicly acknowledged backstop of Japanese state security.

¹⁸ See Michael J. Green, *Japan’s Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Kyle W. Hiscock, “Japan’s Self Defense Forces After the Great East Japan Earthquake Toward a New Status Quo” (Thesis, Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2012), <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/6809>.

¹⁹ Japan Ministry of Defense, *National Defense Program Guidelines FY 2019*, (Tokyo, Japan: Japan Ministry of Defense, 2018), 1, https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/d_policy/national.html.

²⁰ See Japan Ministry of Defense, *National Defense Program Guidelines FY 2013*, (Tokyo, Japan: Japan Ministry of Defense, 2013), https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/d_policy/national.html

²¹ Japan Ministry of Defense, *National Defense Program Guidelines FY 2019*, (Tokyo, Japan: Japan Ministry of Defense, 2018), 7, https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/d_policy/national.html.

D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The central hypothesis of this thesis is: From 1989–2020, Japan has been driven by external factors on a long-term, enduring trajectory towards remilitarization, and the scale of progress along that trajectory has been slowed, but not halted, by certain internal factors. There is an observable gap in scale between the growth of Japan’s security threats and its comparatively subdued balancing response. Internal factors are sufficient to explain that gap by modulating Japan’s perception of acceptable policy responses through powerful domestic antimilitarist norms and suspicion of revisionist political objectives. The mechanism of the above observed outcome is that external factors set the bounds of viable security policy decisions, and then internal factors modulate the security policy outcome within those established bounds. The multiple components of this hypothesis will be individually explored throughout the thesis.

1. Causal Factors of Japanese Security Policy Development

The first component to be explored is the interaction between internal and external factors that culminate in Japanese security policy outcomes. This thesis hypothesizes that external factors serve as the primary driver of Japan’s security policy outcome by exerting a strong influence that overrules internal factor influences. Internal factors such as resistance to the remilitarization trajectory, are only able to slow the progress towards militarization.

External factors influence Japan’s security policy through both direct and indirect mechanisms. The direct mechanism occurs as a result of adversary state actions that present threats Japanese policymakers respond to in order to protect their state’s interests. These perceived threats originate from two places: PRC expansionist policies coupled with extensive military capability development, and DPRK development of nuclear weapons and corresponding missile delivery capabilities. The indirect mechanism occurs as external threats challenge the Japanese populace’s commitment to anti-militarist social norms. As external threats to the safety of the populace increase, it calls into question the sustainability

of the populace's traditional anti-militarist norms and strengthens internal elements that favor development of a more assertive security policy.

Internal factors have slowed the rate at which Japan's security policy otherwise would have moved toward militarization due to external factors. Powerful antiwar norms were enshrined in Article 9 of the post-war Japanese constitution, and have persisted as a strong legal and cultural factor throughout the observed period.²² Miyashita points out that the strength of those antiwar norms has fluctuated over time, but that there is polling data to suggest that domestic popularity of antiwar norms has held steady over the long term, even as direct memories of World War II fade into the past.²³ On the other hand, there are significant internal factors that have supported militarization of the period. The left-wing of Japan's political spectrum, which traditionally supported antiwar policies, has weakened over time as the LDP continues to consolidate power. Finally, the LDP itself has become more hawkish over the period, which has generated security policy initiatives that are on a decidedly militarization trajectory.²⁴

2. Trajectory of Japanese Security Policy Development

The second component of this hypothesis is that the relationship between external and internal factors has placed Japan's security policy on a long-term trajectory to reduce its reliance on U.S. conventional forces to generate deterrent effects against conventional forms of PRC and DPRK aggression. The rate of progress towards that end state is limited by the internal factor influences discussed previously, but those factors are growing weaker over time in relation to external factor influences.

Japan's current security policy trajectory is on a course for remilitarization. As defined above, remilitarization refers to a rebuilding of capacity and willingness to use military force in order to achieve state foreign policy objectives. Japan has developed

²² Akitoshi Miyashita, "Where Do Norms Come from? Foundations of Japan's Postwar Pacifism," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 1 (2007): 99–120, <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lei135>.

²³ Miyashita, 108.

²⁴ Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), 128, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9780801459221>.

offense-oriented amphibious assault and maritime strike capabilities alongside a shift in policy that expands the scenarios in which they could be used. The stated reason for the new capabilities is to fill a preexisting capability gap for defending Japan's island territories and maintaining air defense of the Pacific Ocean.²⁵ Furthermore, Japan's outgoing and incoming Prime Ministers have stated an intent to pursue long-range preemptive strike missile capabilities to protect Japan from possible ballistic missile attacks.²⁶ These military options were all but unthinkable at the start of the observed period, and indicate a clear trajectory of militarization. If the current trajectory continues, Japan's definition of self-defense, collective or otherwise, will likely continue to expand. This assessed future trajectory could be disrupted by a sudden change to the factors driving Japan's security policy development, but their marked consistency over a thirty-one-year period gives reason to suggest the trajectory will hold.

3. Endurance of Current Security Policy Trajectory

The third component of this hypothesis is that Japan's security policy trajectory towards remilitarization appears to be resilient and enduring. The broad trajectory of Japanese policy towards remilitarization has been relatively consistent throughout the 1989–2020 period, despite a regime transition from LDP to Democratic Part of Japan (DPJ) and back again. The trend also predates Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's tenure and continued during the interim period between his first and second periods as Prime Minister. The basis for the trend relies on the continuation of external factor threat, which in the current political climate is exerted by China and North Korea. It appears likely those external pressures will increase over time, while the internal factor of domestic antimilitary norms will remain relatively stagnant. If these trends continue to hold, it can be reasonably hypothesized that Japan's trajectory toward remilitarization is likely to endure, as well.

²⁵ Ankit Panda, "Japan Activates Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade," accessed October 7, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/04/japan-activates-amphibious-rapid-deployment-brigade/>; Miguel Ortiz, "Japan Has Started to Convert Its First Aircraft Carrier in 75 Years," Business Insider, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/japan-starts-conversion-of-first-aircraft-carrier-in-75-years-2020-7>.

²⁶ Mari Yamaguchi, "Japan's Abe Seeks Preemptive Strike Capacity in Policy Shift," AP NEWS, September 11, 2020, <https://apnews.com/article/shinzo-abe-constitutions-world-war-ii-defense-policy-japan-44f2482e2474bcef0b5be8adadc7c3b8>.

E. ROADMAP

The 1989–2020 timeframe was chosen because it offers a thirty-one-year period of study that begins with a tectonic shift in the geopolitical world as the Cold War came to a close. The 1990s were an important period of development for Japan’s security role in the new world order, as it was publicly embarrassed for its unwillingness to participate in Operation Desert Storm in 1990.²⁷ Japan subsequently explored the legal means at its disposal to bear international security costs abroad, which led to the establishment of Japanese participation in UN peacekeeping operations. The years 2001 to 2003 offer a picture of policy progression that began with the infamous Al-Qaeda 9/11 terrorist attacks and culminated in the unprecedented 2003 decision to send JSDF personnel to hostile foreign soil in the form of non-combat support troops. The subsequent 2004–2020 period will highlight Japanese security policy developments that emerged after the 2003 decision and provide the most-current-possible data for assessing the probable course of Japanese security policy development in the future. The twenty-year period under examination also covers the 2011 earthquake, which had a dramatic impact upon Japanese domestic opinion toward the JSDF, the unprecedented expansion of China’s maritime forces and territorial ambitions, and the realization of North Korea’s nuclear weapons program.

This thesis will progress in three parts. First, this thesis will establish the course of Japan’s security policy trajectory over the observed period. The goal will be to highlight the fundamental change in status regarding Japan’s capabilities and willingness to use its military abroad. This will be essential to have as a baseline premise for arguing the importance of the various factors that drove it. Next, this thesis will engage in a detailed analysis of the underlying factors that drove the observed policy trajectory. Especially important will be to understand the degree to which the factors changed over the period, both in ability to affect policy outcomes and the direction that they pushed policy development. Finally, this thesis will use the first two parts of the thesis to argue for a probable future security policy trajectory, based on an assessment of the current durability

²⁷ Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power*, A Council on Foreign Relations Book (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2019), 70–73.

of various factors. Of course, a sudden disruption of factors, or the introduction of a new one, introduces the possibility of a change to the future trajectory. Nevertheless, it remains a useful exercise because future academics could assess how such a new factor will interact with the existing structure, and thereby understand the newly established trajectory.

To test the causal factors component of the hypothesis, this thesis will examine highlight moments of Japanese state decision-making behavior in scenarios that pitted the internal and external factors in opposition to one another. If it can be shown that either side exercises an outsized impact on decision-making, then it can be determined that one is the primary and the other is the secondary driver of Japanese security policy. Based on existing scholarship, it appears most likely that both factors exert considerable influence upon Japanese leadership's decision-making, but the stronger factor has more power to influence Japan's security policy trajectory over the long period. Possible case studies include flashpoints within the ongoing Senkaku Islands dispute, Liancourt Rocks dispute, Japanese participation in the Iraq War, U.S. basing within Japan, North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens, and capability development of the JSDF. To use the Senkaku Islands dispute as an example, the following aspects would be considered: Do Chinese military territorial water incursions trigger short-term responses from the Japanese military, such as increased aircraft patrols over the island, increased naval/coast guard vessels on station, or even an in-kind territorial water incursion of their own? Do longer term changes to Chinese policy regarding the Senkaku Islands trigger longer term security policy responses from the Japanese government to counter the Chinese actions?

To test the endurance component of the hypothesis, a qualitative assessment will be made of the past and current durability of the various sub-factors that support each of the identified primary factors. If the primary factors, and their sub-factors, have been stable over the period and present conditions are suitable for their future stability, then a case will be made for the usefulness of assessing a probable future security policy trajectory that is driven by those factors. The most significant external factors to be examined are China/North Korea threat and the US/Japan alliance. The most significant internal factors to be examined are Japanese antimilitary social norms and suspicion of revisionists.

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II. OBSERVED SECURITY POLICY TRAJECTORY

This chapter will characterize the broad trajectory of Japanese security policy development during the observed period of 1989 to 2020. By measure of global reach, international behavior, and force versatility, Japanese security policy has undergone significant development during the observed period. Since 1989, Japanese land forces have been operationally deployed abroad, albeit always in a non-violent capacity; new military capability acquisitions have significantly increased Japan's capacity to unilaterally address security threats, including some capabilities to project force throughout the Asia region; and a high-level reinterpretation of Japanese constitution Article 9 has provided Japanese policymakers and military leaders alike with greater strategic and tactical options for military force employment. However, three significant restraints upon Japan's force projection capability have not budged. Japan's defense budget has not increased beyond its unofficial baseline of 1% GDP, Japan has not passed a formal revision to the state constitution that continues to restrict the activities of Japan's Self Defense Forces, and anti-militarist social norms continue to restrain security policy development.²⁸ Despite those continuing restraints, Japanese security policy has maintained a credible trajectory towards increased military capacity over the observed period.

A. 1989–2000

In 1989, the collapse of the Berlin Wall set in motion a geopolitical sea change that set the stage for Japan's remilitarization trajectory. The subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union that culminated in December 1991 prompted discussion of Japan's new role in the world. Prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, Japan's only credible external threat was the Soviet Union itself, against which Japan enjoyed both the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella and confidence in the US' overwhelming focus on deterring Soviet aggression. Japan had, up to that point, settled into its defense role as a Western-Pacific partner to the U.S. in support of that effort. After the fall, however, Japan's threat landscape began to

²⁸ World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP) - Japan | Data," The World Bank Group, accessed December 6, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS?locations=JP>.

shift. Japan became less important as a strategic bulwark for the U.S. and therefore its role in the international order became less defined. At the same time, North Korea began to assert its threat capability with the development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles capable of reaching Japan, and China's military and economic growth surged in in close proportion to the fading of Japan's hopes for Chinese liberalization.

In 1990, Japan came under international political pressure to support the US-led war effort against Iraq in the Gulf War. It was made clear that Japan's desired role of lending financial support while withholding its own military forces from becoming physically involved was not viewed by the U.S. as an adequate method of contribution.²⁹ Despite the fact that Japan pledged and eventually delivered \$13 billion dollars in support to the US-led effort, Japan faced widespread international backlash for a perceived lack of willingness to engage in burden sharing commensurate with its capability and responsibility. An important point to note is that Japan's first attempt to assuage these international concerns was to dispatch Japan Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) aircraft for the transport of war refugees to Cairo. Significantly, this initiative failed because of outspoken resistance both from the opposition parties within the government and a majority of the Japanese populace. In fact, an *Asahi Shimbun* survey found that 55% of respondents were actively opposed to the deployment of the JASDF, even for a purely non-violent transport mission.³⁰

In April of 1991, in response to continuing international pressure and embarrassment for its inability to offer a physical contribution to the Gulf War effort, the Japanese government announced that it would send Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) minesweeper ships to the Persian Gulf as part of the JSDF's first operational overseas deployment since its founding.³¹ The legal and political justification was made that the mine-clearing operation was necessary for ensuring the security and prosperity of Japan, as it relied heavily upon oil transported through the Persian Gulf. Purrington argues

²⁹ Courtney Purrington, "Tokyo's Policy Responses During the Gulf War and the Impact of the 'Iraqi Shock' on Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 65, no. 2 (1992): 161–81, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2760167>.

³⁰ Purrington, 166.

³¹ Purrington, 171.

that, in fact, the operation was largely a symbolic gesture intended to stem the tide of international bad will towards Japan, as well as to establish a precedent for the JSDF to be sent overseas under specific conditions. Six minesweeper ships were sent, successfully conducted minesweeping operations, and returned without incident. However, Japan's international reputation would continue to be haunted by the accusation that it had provided too little, too late.³²In June of 1992, Japan's governing Diet approved the contentious International Peace Cooperation Bill to enable Japanese troop participation in UN Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) abroad. The bill established five principles that must be satisfied for Japanese participation in a PKO:

- 1) Agreement on a ceasefire shall have been reached among the parties to the armed conflict.
- 2) Consent for the conduct of UN peacekeeping operations as well as Japan's participation in such operations shall have been obtained from the host country as well as from the parties to the armed conflict.
- 3) The operations shall strictly maintain impartiality, and not favor any of the parties to the armed conflict.
- 4) Should any of the requirements in the above-mentioned guideline cease to be satisfied, the International Peace Cooperation Corps may suspend International Peace Cooperation Assignments. Unless the requirements are satisfied again quickly, the Government of Japan may terminate the dispatch of the personnel engaged in International Peace Cooperation Assignments.
- 5) The use of weapons shall be within the limits judged reasonably necessary according to the circumstances.³³

The text of the bill makes it apparent that explicit care was paid to the principles of consent, consensus, and peacefulness that Japanese troops were required to abide by in efforts abroad. Nevertheless, a policy door had been opened to scenarios where Japanese troops were deployed and operating within another sovereign state's borders. Just three

³² Teshima Ryuichi, "Gaiko Haisen - 130 Oku Doru Wa Suna Ni Kieta [A Diplomatic Defeat - 13 Billion Dollars Disappear in the Sand]," *Shinchosha*, 2006; Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 58.

Secretariat of the International Peace Cooperation Headquarters, "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)," Cabinet Office Home Page, accessed November 8, 2020, http://www.pko.go.jp/pko_e/faq/faq.html.

months later, Japan dispatched a contingent of Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) troops abroad to Cambodia in support of a UN-sanctioned PKO to monitor democratic elections and assist with reconstruction of the state following the Cambodian-Vietnamese War and departure of Vietnamese forces. Japan continued its policy of participation in PKOs and Humanitarian Relief Operations by subsequently dispatching troops to Mozambique, the Golan Heights, Rwanda, and East Timor. In all of these cases the dispatched Japanese forces operated under UN mandate and operational control.³⁴

B. 2001–2009

In 2001, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., Japan once again came under political pressure from the U.S. to assume a more tangible role in international security efforts. This time, Japan was pressured to support the emerging War on Terror.³⁵ Japan initially responded by approving the Special Measures Law for Preventing Terrorism at Sea in November of 2001, opening the door for the JMSDF to participate in Indian Ocean refueling operations in support of coalition vessels. Japan maintained that effort until 2010, involving a total of fourteen JMSDF ships and 2,400 personnel throughout the period.³⁶ This role was relatively low-risk, and decidedly non-combat, but demonstrated an intent and capability (albeit limited) to support international efforts abroad. More importantly, despite the peaceful nature of the mission, the refueling efforts demonstrated Japan's capacity for conducting sustained, long-range logistics operations to areas far beyond the waters surrounding Japan. The operational success of the operation marked a milestone of developing post-war Japanese military capacity that could be employed in future force projection endeavors. However, the refueling mission came to an end in January of 2010. The decision resulted from a domestic power transition from the LDP to DPJ leadership

³⁴ Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Japan's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping Operations," Japan MOFA, accessed November 18, 2020, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/pko/archive.html>.

³⁵ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 70–104.

³⁶ Smith, 71.

who had made a campaign pledge to end the mission due to the increasing Japanese domestic unpopularity of the US-led effort in Afghanistan.³⁷

In 2003, the Japanese government decided to take on a larger role in the burden sharing of global security efforts by deploying JGSDF ground troops to support the reconstruction efforts in Iraq. The decision was enabled by the passing of new legislation, the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq, which permitted, for the first time, the dispatch of JGSDF troops to foreign territory not associated with an active UN PKO. The significance of JGSDF participation in Iraq comes from the unprecedented scale, duration, and expansion of Japanese Rules of Engagement for its troops. However, Japan's internal norms and laws limited the Japanese forces to non-combat roles. As a result of strong, continued commitment by the Japanese public to constitution Article 9, Japan's forces remained prohibited from engaging in combat under any circumstances except the absolute minimum necessary for self-defense. That definition of self-defense expanded from the strictest definition of single members of a unit, to the unit as a whole, to finally include defense of coalition forces that were working directly alongside the JGSDF unit.³⁸ The tight restrictions drew criticism domestically and abroad, as many questioned the utility of a Japanese military presence when the burden of their own force protection largely fell upon other nations' forces. Internal critics also bemoaned that Japanese ground commanders were placed in a dangerous position due the extreme restrictions upon their capability to defend their units. However, despite the JGSDF restraints on self-defense capacity, from 2003 to 2006 a total of 5,500 JGSDF troops served alongside coalition forces in Iraq without a single loss of life.³⁹

³⁷ Stars and Stripes, "Japan Ends Refueling Mission That Aided War Effort in Afghanistan," Stars and Stripes, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.stripes.com/news/japan-ends-refueling-mission-that-aided-war-effort-in-afghanistan-1.98083>; Martin Fackler, "Japan Ends Naval Support for Afghan War (Published 2010)," *The New York Times*, January 15, 2010, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/16/world/asia/16japan.html>.

³⁸ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 79.

³⁹ Smith, 80.

In 2002, the Japan Ministry of Defense (MOD) committed funds to acquire the US-developed Aegis ballistic missile defense system for use onboard JMSDF destroyers.⁴⁰ Publicly, the Japanese government's rationale for acquisition of the defense system was solely focused upon the rising ballistic missile threat from North Korea.⁴¹ North Korea had just made headlines by announcing a resumption of its nuclear weapons development program, and had maintained a capability to strike the Japanese mainland with conventional ballistic missiles since 1990.⁴² However, Hughes points out that the defense capability applied equally well to ballistic missile threats from China which, despite being more politically sensitive to confront directly, were seen as posing a long-term rising threat to Japanese security. The capability acquisition was not a radical departure from previously established JMSDF defense roles as the shield in relation to the U.S. sword. However, it added another layer to the JMSDF's role in strategic deterrence and strengthened Japan's unilateral capability to protect its territory from attack.

In 2008, the Japanese government further expanded its global maritime ambitions by calling for the UN to create a Combined Maritime Force (CMF) to combat and deter maritime pirates off the coast of Somalia.⁴³ Japan's move was a response to an alarming growth in piracy of shipping traffic upon which the Japanese economy depended. For the first time, Japan proactively sought new international roles for its maritime forces. Smith discusses the progression of this mission as two JMSDF Destroyers were dispatched along with Japan Coast Guard patrol ships to participate in the CMF and thereby deter piracy in the Gulf of Aden. Japan's ambitions in this area grew when Japan began stationing P-3 maritime surveillance aircraft in Djibouti in 2009 and established a permanent base for

⁴⁰ See Richard Cronin, "Japan-U.S. Cooperation on Ballistic Missile Defense: Issues and Prospects (CRS Report No. RL31337)," March 19, 2002, https://heinonline-org.libproxy.nps.edu/HOL/Page?collection=congrech&handle=hein.crs/crsack0001&id=2&men_tab=srchresults.

⁴¹ Christopher W. Hughes, "'Super-Sizing' the DPRK Threat: Japan's Evolving Military Posture and North Korea," *Asian Survey; Berkeley* 49, no. 2 (April 2009): 291–311, <http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.nps.edu/10.1525/as.2009.49.2.291>.

⁴² James Brooke, "Japan Fears North Korea; U.S. Promises Defense Shield (Published 2002)," *The New York Times*, December 26, 2002, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/26/world/japan-fears-north-korea-us-promises-defense-shield.html>.

⁴³ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 96–99.

Japanese forces in Djibouti in 2011. Throughout that period and continuously since then, Japan has maintained a rotation of JMSDF destroyers and P-3 surveillance aircraft to Djibouti. Outside of the law-enforcement benefits, these operations have tested and affirmed a new precedent for Japanese maritime forces to operate abroad long-term.

C. 2010–2020

In 2010, the Japan-China dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands entered a newly confrontational period that remains active at the time of this writing in 2020. On September 7, 2010, Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) vessels sighted a Chinese fishing trawler, *Minjinyu*, within the disputed territorial waters of the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea.⁴⁴ After ignoring demands from JCG vessels to depart the area, the *Minjinyu* collided with one of the JCG vessels and then attempted to flee. The captain was caught and arrested by the JCG and then taken back to Japan for questioning. The fourteen Chinese crewmembers onboard the vessel were detained as witnesses to the suspected crime. The incident sparked widespread anti-Japanese outrage in China as a result of accusations that Japan's actions violated several agreements, chief among which was the 1975 Sino-Japanese Fisheries Agreement that stated prosecution of legal infractions was only to be handled by the flag state of the accused. Japan responded that a serious crime like ramming did not fall under the jurisdiction of Fisheries agreement, and that the agreement itself allowed for the temporary detaining of evidence and witnesses "necessary or appropriate" to determine the facts of an incident.

In response, Beijing took several unprecedented foreign policy steps, most notably a demand "for the immediate release of the captain," the "suspension of a bilateral dialogue on joint oil and gas development in the East China Sea," halted shipments of rare-earth metals, arrested four Japanese nationals on suspicion of spying, and sent a Chinese Maritime Law Enforcement ship to the Senkaku Islands.⁴⁵ The immediate issue was

⁴⁴ Michael Green, "Counter-Coercion Series: Senkaku Islands Trawler Collision," Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, May 18, 2017, <https://amti.csis.org/counter-co-trawler-collision/>.

⁴⁵ Chinese Embassy to U.S., "Chinese Premier Urges Japan to Release Chinese Skipper Immediately, Unconditionally," Chinese Embassy to U.S., accessed November 18, 2020, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/wenjiabaoun/t754931.htm>; Green, "Counter-Coercion Series."

resolved when the Japanese Prime Minister met with U.S. President Obama and, Green believes, made the decision to release the Chinese captain in exchange for explicit assurances from the U.S. that the Senkaku Islands were covered under the protection of the U.S.-Japan bilateral security treaty.⁴⁶

In September 2012, Japan demonstrated an increased willingness to assert its contested claim to sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. Japan purchased the islands from a Japanese private citizen who claimed to own the three largest islands within the eight-island cluster. The Chinese response was to begin routinely sending Chinese Coast Guard vessels on territorial water (TTW) incursions into the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands as a challenge to the Japanese sovereignty claim over the feature. Prior to the Japanese government purchase of the islands, maritime incursions into the Senkaku Islands were relatively rare and airborne incursions were unheard of. Sometimes, entire years would pass without incident.⁴⁷ Following the purchase, however, Chinese TTW incursions peaked at a rate of seventeen per month in the late 2012–2013 period and then settled down to an average rate of ten incursions per month from 2014–2020.⁴⁸ In 2012, China also began the practice of sending State Oceanic Administration surveillance aircraft through the islands' airspace, which triggers fighter scrambles from Japan and contributed to the relocation of an F-15 squadron from mainland Japan to Naha, Okinawa.⁴⁹

China has so far stopped short of sending military vessels within the contested territorial waters, but it remains a concern of the Japanese public that China could

⁴⁶ Green, "Counter-Coercion Series."

⁴⁷ Andrew Chubb, "Xi Jinping and China's Maritime Policy," *Brookings* (blog), January 22, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/xi-jinping-and-chinas-maritime-policy/>.

⁴⁸ Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Trends in Chinese Government and Other Vessels in the Waters Surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and Japan's Response," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed November 4, 2020, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/page23e_000021.html.

⁴⁹ "Mr. Chikao Kawai, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lodges a Protest against Dr. Han Zhiqiang, Acting Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Japan" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, December 13, 2012), http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2012/12/1213_03.html; Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 119.

eventually attempt to seize the islands by force.⁵⁰ Smith discusses that Japan responded to the increased Chinese activity by increasing its own presence around the islands.⁵¹ The increased military activity culminated in a new status quo in which both China and Japan routinely patrol the territorial waters of the Senkaku Islands using surveillance aircraft and Coast Guard vessels, triggering fighter scrambles and the routine presence of naval combatant ships just over the horizon.⁵²

In March 2011, a 9.0 earthquake, the largest on record, struck off the Northeastern coast of Japan. The shaking triggered a fifty-foot high tsunami that, combined with the effects of the earthquake, killed 19,000 people. The subsequent reactor explosions at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant resulted in a precipitous drop of public confidence in the Japanese government, generally, and Tokyo Electric Power Company, specifically. The public responded to the JSDF with an inverse upswell of confidence and goodwill for its efforts in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief across the affected areas.⁵³ Therefore, while the earthquake and subsequent JSDF's disaster relief efforts were not directly tied to immediate security policy change, the event is significant in this timeline for two reasons. First, it demonstrated the JSDF's capacity to lead a sustained, large-scale operation in which it played the leading role among international partners. Second, it led to a lasting upswell of Japanese public support for the JSDF that has significant implications for the domestic factors of Japanese security policy development.

In 2014, the Japanese Diet announced an official reinterpretation of Japanese Constitution Article 9.⁵⁴ This was a step short of an actual revision of the text, but the reinterpretation of the existing text allowed for the policy creation of a concept known as

⁵⁰ Jesse Johnson, "80% of Japanese Fear Military Clash around Senkakus, Poll Finds," The Japan Times, September 14, 2016, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/14/national/pew-poll-finds-80-japanese-fear-possible-clash-china-senkakus/>.

⁵¹ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 206–8.

⁵² Smith, 206.

⁵³ Richard J. Samuels, *3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan* (Ithaca, UNITED STATES: Cornell University Press, 2013), 92–93, 200, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/detail.action?docID=3138451>.

⁵⁴ See Hughes, "Japan's Strategic Trajectory and Collective Self-Defense."

collective self-defense. The change in policy from unilateral to collective self-defense allows for a widening of the scenarios in which JSDF units can engage in combat to defend allies. Prior to this change, JMSDF ships that were sailing alongside U.S. navy ships would not be allowed to return fire if the U.S. ship came under attack by an adversary. Now, the policy is in place so that JMSDF ships can respond with force to attacks on allied units which are acting in defense of Japan. This change enabled the possibility of JMSDF ships to sail with U.S. ships in an operational, combat-ready capacity for the first time. The fruits of this policy shift were first observed in 2017 when JMSDF ships sailed in real-world operations alongside U.S. Navy ships.⁵⁵ Strategically speaking, this policy shift improves Japan's and the US's combined deterrence capacity as the members are better able to allocate resources to support one another's operations.

In 2018, Japan made two capability acquisition decisions that will dramatically expand Japan's technical capability to exert force and represented a clear breakaway from the strategic limitations of the past. First, Japan established the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (ARDB).⁵⁶ This is effectively a small marine corps of fewer than 3,000 soldiers, capable of executing amphibious operations. The force appears to be directed at Japan's ongoing island territorial disputes with China, Russia, and South Korea. In essence, Japan now holds a force capable of retaking island holdings that have been temporarily seized by an adversary military, so the hope is that capability will deter an adversary from making a land-grab attempt. The second acquisition decision was the announcement that Japan's two IZUMO-class Helicopter Destroyers would be refitted to carry, launch, and recover Japan's newly acquired F-35B multi-role aircraft.⁵⁷ Such a refit

⁵⁵ Erik Slavin and Wyatt Olson, "Reagan, Vinson Carrier Groups Team with Japanese off Korean Peninsula; Nimitz on Its Way," *Stars and Stripes*, accessed June 12, 2020, <https://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/reagan-vinson-carrier-groups-team-with-japanese-off-korean-peninsula-nimitz-on-its-way-1.471400>; "Japan Sends Warship to Escort U.S. Vessel," *BBC News*, May 1, 2017, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39768110>.

⁵⁶ John Pitt, "The Meaning of Japan's New Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade Launch," accessed June 12, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/the-meaning-of-japans-new-amphibious-rapid-deployment-brigade-launch/>.

⁵⁷ Franz-Stefan Gady, "Japan to Convert Izumo-Class Into F-35-Carrying Aircraft Carrier," accessed June 12, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/12/japan-to-convert-izumo-class-into-f-35-carrying-aircraft-carrier/>.

transforms those vessels into small aircraft carriers in all-but-name and represents Japan's first post-war maritime capability of projecting force against land-based targets. The Japan Ministry of Defense insists that these acquisitions are not a reorientation towards offensive capability, but rather offer increased versatility in responding to scenarios where Japanese territory has come under attack.⁵⁸

D. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The trajectory of security policy developments over the period illustrate a trend towards increased military capability, both in legal and material terms. Over the period, Japan established and exercised conditions in which its forces could be deployed abroad, albeit in a nonviolent capacity. Constitutional reinterpretation has allowed for the creation of collective self-defense policy, expanding the scenarios in which Japanese Self Defense Forces could legally resort to the use of force in conflict. What's more, the acquisition of new weapons and platforms, such as the Aegis ballistic missile defense system, F-35 Joint Strike fighters with standoff munitions, a small carrier to field them overseas, and a modest amphibious force designed for island assault, all indicate toward a coherent desire for expanded military capability. However, in spite of the aforementioned developments, two important metrics remain unchanged, and continue to limit Japan's capacity for military power. Perhaps most prominently is the continued lack of official amendment to Japanese constitution Article 9, which prohibits the maintenance of "war potential," currently interpreted to mean a standing military (Self Defense Force excepted) and strategic weapons.⁵⁹ Second, the Japanese defense budget has not significantly increased from its 1% of GDP starting point at the beginning of the period, thereby precluding all possibility for the general growth of Japan's armed forces.⁶⁰ The next Chapter will explore the factors that have driven Japan's observed security policy trajectory.

⁵⁸ Gady.

⁵⁹ See Sayuri Umeda, "Japan: Article 9 of the Constitution | Law Library of Congress," web page, February 2006, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/japan-constitution/article9.php>.

⁶⁰ World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP) - Japan | Data."

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III. FACTORS

The timeline above establishes a past trajectory of security policy development towards increased military development, which begs the question of what factors have driven those observed outcomes. The examination of factors will begin with the IR Realism premise that external security threats drive state foreign policy decisions. Walt's Balance of Threat Theory has been chosen as a suitable theoretical framework for exploring this premise, but this thesis does not take a position on the accuracy of the specific points within the theory.⁶¹

In broad strokes, Walt's theory argues that states respond to perceived external threat generated by other states, and that threat is generated through four factors: aggregate power, proximate power, offensive capability, and offensive intent.⁶² The state response to threat is typically balancing, either externally by seeking partners or internally by strengthening its unilateral ability to guarantee security. Alternatively, a state that is so overwhelmingly threatened as to make balancing unfeasible will attempt to bandwagon with the threatening state as a last resort. Balance of Threat Theory has been criticized for its lack of concrete measures that could be used to qualitatively evaluate the validity of the theory. Gause, for instance, points out that Walt does not offer a method for weighting the four identified potential threat factors, which limits the theory to a qualitative analysis role that relies on murkier arguments of human psychological perception and intention.⁶³ As a result, the conclusions reached when applying Walt's theory to real world cases must rely upon qualitative assessments made by the analyst as to the degree of perceived threat generated by each of the four threat factors. In the case of this paper's analysis regarding the difference between Japan's expected versus observed balancing actions, quantitative data is used in combination with Japanese diplomatic statements, official documents, and

⁶¹ Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (1985): 3–43, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2538540>.

⁶² Walt, 9.

⁶³ F Gause III, "Balancing What? Threat Perception and Alliance Choice in the Gulf," *Security Studies* 13, no. 2 (December 30, 2003): 280–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410490521271>.

observed balancing actions in order to make a qualitative assessment of the perceived external threat that Japanese policymakers experience.

Japan's security policy development trajectory, in the face of rising threats, appears to fit the theory's anticipated policy direction: balancing. However, there is an observable difference between the degree of balancing anticipated by Balance of Threat Theory and the observed reality. Japan's security policy development has not been sufficient to match the vast increase in perceived threat that has been generated by China and North Korea. The explanatory gap can be sufficiently filled through examination of Japan's powerful internal political factors that ultimately modulate Japanese elite decisions and create the observed security policy outcomes.

For the purposes of our analysis, the factors influencing Japanese security policy outcomes will be broadly divided into two categories: external and internal. However, it must be acknowledged that internal factors cannot be completely separated from external factors. After all, internal factors respond to and are shaped over time by external factor inputs. It remains worthwhile to separate them for the purposes of this discussion because the internal factors of a state, as they exist at any given moment, are shaped by forces in addition to the typical international structures of power and threat. In Japan's case, those forces include antiwar norms, a broad distrust of domestic revisionist political agendas, political party stagnation, and the personal power and preferences of the sitting Prime Minister. Those internal factors then have the effect of modulating the observed state security policy outcome. External factor inputs are fed into the internal factor system and are interpreted by various internal factor elements in the process of forming state security policy change. The internal factors of the Japanese state possess a significant capability to modulate state security policy outcomes, but the observed long-term trajectory of Japanese security policy from 1989 to 2020 has primarily conformed, in direction if not degree, with that anticipated by external factor inputs. The individual elements of the various internal and external factors do not uniformly exert pressure in the same policy direction. Nevertheless, external factor inputs have, in aggregate, driven Japanese security policy towards increased militarization while internal factor inputs have, in aggregate, acted as a braking mechanism upon that policy change.

In the following sections of this chapter, this thesis will explore what has been identified to be the most significant external and internal factors. The external factors identified are China presence, North Korea presence, U.S. presence, and U.S. diplomacy. The internal factors identified are antimilitarist norms, single-party dominance, suspicion of revisionists, and prime minister preferences.

A. EXTERNAL FACTORS

1. China

China's presence has become a much stronger factor of Japan's security policy considerations over the observed time period as a result of its dramatically increased manufacturing capacity, military modernization, and territorial ambitions. Each of these must be examined in accordance with Walt's threat factors of aggregate power, proximate power, offensive capability, and offensive intent to gain a clear understanding of the extent to which China influenced the development of Japan's security policy over the observed time period.⁶⁴

a. Aggregate Power

Walt's suggested sub-factors of aggregate power are population, industrial capability, military capability, and technological prowess.⁶⁵ This paper will use World Bank data for the measures of population and industrial capability, which is limited to 2018 as the most recent year's measures. Population provides a broad measure of available manpower resources that can be directed to warfare and supporting roles during a conflict. By this measure, China has dwarfed Japan throughout all recorded history and certainly in our observed time period from 1989 to 2020. In 2000, China had a population of 1.263 billion in comparison to Japan's 126.8 million.⁶⁶ By 2018, the most recent year of data

⁶⁴ Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," 9.

⁶⁵ Walt, 9.

⁶⁶ World Bank, "Population, Total - China, Japan," The World Bank Group, accessed June 12, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?end=2018&locations=CN-JP&start=2000>.

available to the World Bank, China's population had increased to 1.393 billion while Japan's had slightly decreased to 126.5 million. To put in perspective the tremendous disparity here, China's population increased over the period by a greater number of people than Japan has in total.

The most straightforward measure of industrial capability is GDP. While not the only measure available, it provides a broad approximation of the material resources that a state can direct towards warfare during a conflict. Unlike population, China and Japan experienced a dramatic change of relative position by this measure. In 2000, China's dramatically larger population produced a comparatively low GDP (adjusted for 2020 dollar values) of \$1.21 trillion, while Japan held a GDP of \$4.89 trillion.⁶⁷ By 2010, the balance shifted as China's GDP rose to \$6.09 trillion against Japan's \$5.7 trillion. By 2018, China's GDP had risen to a staggering \$13.61 trillion, and Japan's had fallen to \$4.97 trillion.

Military Capability will be quantified in this section through the broad measure of military spending as an attempt to identify China and Japan's differences in aggregate military power rather than specific capability differences, which will be explored later in the offensive capabilities section. By this measure, China's military spending has dramatically expanded since 2000 and transitioned from a subordinate position relative to Japan into a dominant one.⁶⁸ In 2000, China spent \$43.1 billion (adjusted for 2018 dollars) in comparison to Japan's \$45.4 billion.⁶⁹ By 2001, China's military spending grew to \$52 billion, exceeding Japan's \$46.2 billion. By 2019, China's military spending had grown to \$266.4 billion in comparison to Japan's nearly stagnant \$46.6 billion.

Technological prowess is a difficult factor to measure quantitatively, especially because a state's technological prowess is often unevenly distributed across the various

⁶⁷ World Bank, "GDP (Current US\$) - China, Japan," The World Bank Group, accessed June 12, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?end=2018&locations=CN-JP&start=2000>.

⁶⁸ CSIS, "What Does China Really Spend on Its Military?," *ChinaPower Project* (blog), December 28, 2015, <http://chinapower.csis.org/military-spending/>.

⁶⁹ World Bank, "Military Expenditure (Current USD) - China, Japan," The World Bank Group, accessed June 12, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.CD?end=2018&locations=CN-JP&start=2000>.

public, private, and military sectors. For example, a state may be a world leader in biotechnology while lacking any indigenous capability to manufacture missiles. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development offers two possible methods to measure this data, with widely varying results. The first is by the number of active triadic patent families (patents filed in the three major world patent offices: U.S. Patent Office, European Patent Office, and Japan Patent Office). By this count, Japan remained far ahead of China throughout the entire period. In 2000, China held a score on this index of 87.01 in comparison to Japan's 18,264.03.⁷⁰ By 2017 (the latest year of data), China had only just begun to close the gap with a value of 4,152.15 against Japan's 18,219.25. As with the other measures, China shows signs of rapid growth while Japan remains stagnant, but here the gap is so broad that Japan remains dominant for the time being. China has pulled ahead, however, by measure of gross domestic spending on research and development. In 2000, China's domestic expenditure measured \$44.44 billion in comparison to Japan's \$133.30 billion, but by 2008 China matched Japan's yearly expenditure.⁷¹ By 2018 (last year of data), China's domestic R&D expenditure grew to \$526.06 billion in comparison to Japan's relatively stagnant \$173.28 billion. The wide discrepancy between the two measures is worthy of its own examination, but the CSIS China Power Team offers some potential insights. In terms of patents, China's patent office receives and grants more domestic patents than any other country in the world, but many of those domestic patent claims are relatively low-value and do not often translate into submissions at other recognized international patent offices.⁷² CSIS goes on to argue that perhaps Chinese patents, and therefore Chinese R&D investment is being channeled toward relatively low-innovation developments.

⁷⁰ US OECD, "Research and Development (R&D) - Triadic Patent Families - OECD Data," OECD, accessed May 27, 2020, <http://data.oecd.org/rd/triadic-patent-families.htm>.

⁷¹ US OECD, "Research and Development (R&D) - Gross Domestic Spending on R&D - OECD Data," OECD, accessed May 27, 2020, <http://data.oecd.org/rd/gross-domestic-spending-on-r-d.htm>.

⁷² CSIS, "Are Patents Indicative of Chinese Innovation?," *ChinaPower Project* (blog), February 15, 2016, <https://chinapower.csis.org/patents/>.

b. Proximate Power

In terms of proximate power, China stands less than five hundred miles of open sea away from mainland Japan. Accordingly, the proximate power of distance is significant. However, the proximate power generated by close proximity alone is tempered by the fact that the sea offers considerable protection from Chinese ground forces. Their use against Japan would necessitate either an amphibious landing or airborne operation, each with significant drawbacks. On the other hand, the sea does nothing to temper the proximate power generated by China's numerous warships, aircraft, and missiles that can easily be brought within striking distance of the Japanese mainland. A more specific analysis of those threatening capabilities will be explored below, in the offensive capabilities section.

c. Offensive Capability

In terms of military power, China invested heavily in its offensive capabilities from 2000 to 2020. However, strictly by number of personnel and platforms, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has shrunk from 2000 to 2019. For example, in 2000, the PLA numbered 2.4 million active-duty personnel, with 1.3 million People's Armed Police (PAP) and 1.5 million reserve militia that China could mobilize in a conflict.⁷³ As of 2019, China reduced that force to approximately 2 million active-duty and 500,000 PAP personnel.⁷⁴ Despite the manpower reduction, the overall combat effectiveness, and more importantly the offensive capability, of those forces has dramatically increased. China carried out its force modernization alongside a strategic shift that began in the early 1990s toward long-range combat against high-end adversaries that are held outside of Chinese borders.⁷⁵

The PLA Rocket Force has maintained an offensive capability before and during our entire observed time period that presents an existential threat to Japan. It is true that

⁷³ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000," accessed May 28, 2020, <https://archive.defense.gov/news/Jun2000/china06222000.htm>.

⁷⁴ Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power" (DIA, January 15, 2019), https://www.dia.mil/Portals/27/Documents/News/Military%20Power%20Publications/China_Military_Power_FINAL_5MB_20190103.pdf.

⁷⁵ Defense Intelligence Agency, 2.

China maintained a no-first-use nuclear weapons policy throughout the period, but Japan could feasibly come under nuclear attack if the United States were to engage in a nuclear war with China. What has changed since 2000 is a dramatic expansion in the variety, quantity, and flexibility of ballistic missile systems. In 2000, China only had one type of road-mobile solid-fuel MRBM, the CSS-5. The rest of the Chinese ballistic missile inventory was liquid-fueled, and therefore less mobile and slower to fire.⁷⁶ As of 2019, China maintains seven different types of road-mobile solid-fuel ballistic missiles that cover the full spectrum of range and payload.⁷⁷ The increased survivability of these systems and a wider range of employment options provides China with a greater offensive capability in this realm in 2020 than they began with in 2000.

The PLA Airforce (PLAA) has, as with China's other service branches, undergone a reduction in manpower and platforms alongside an overall increase in offensive capability. In 2000, China maintained 1000 bombers that were all limited to unguided munitions.⁷⁸ By 2019, the PLAA bomber force had been reduced to 450 aircraft. However, these are now all variants of the H-6 Badger platform, some of which are outfitted to fire air-launched CJ-20 cruise missiles (ALCM) and are capable of striking targets anywhere in Japan from standoff ranges.⁷⁹

The PLA has maintained a limited offensive capability that could be brought to bear against Japan throughout the observed time period. While it has maintained a large number of personnel (3.5 million active, reserve and PAP in 2000 compared to 1.5 million active and PAP in 2019), China's modest amphibious capability limits the number of those troops that could be employed to threaten Japan.⁸⁰ China's amphibious ship force has only grown

⁷⁶ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000."

⁷⁷ Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power," 92.

⁷⁸ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000."

⁷⁹ See Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power."

⁸⁰ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000"; Department of Defense, "ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2019," n.d., https://media.defense.gov/2019/May/02/2002127082/-1/-1/2019_CHINA_MILITARY_POWER_REPORT.pdf.

from fifty to fifty-three ships in the time between 2000 and 2019, capable of delivering a single division ashore. To further mitigate PLAA's threat to Japan, that limited amphibious force is double tasked to deliver PLAN Marine Corps (PLANMC) forces ashore.

The PLANMC brings a ground force capability that can threaten Japanese island holdings but would be unlikely to present a serious threat to the Japanese mainland. It has significantly developed since 2000, when the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) assessed it to be "capable of performing only regional, battalion-size amphibious operations."⁸¹ As of 2019, the PLANMC had a personnel strength of 28,000 – 35,000 and has trained for high-end combined-arms conflicts.⁸² Such a force dwarfs Japan's equivalent force, the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (ARDB), which numbers less than 3,000 personnel.⁸³

The PLA Navy (PLAN) has significantly increased the number of surface combatant vessels (from 60 in 2000 to 108 in 2020) while maintaining a nearly constant number of submarines (from 66 in 2000 to 62 in 2020).⁸⁴ The most significant naval threat shift for Japan, however, comes from the increasing capability of Chinese naval combatants throughout the period. In 2000, most of the PLAN submarine fleet lacked anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM) capability, and the six that had it were only capable of firing relatively rudimentary C-802 missiles while surfaced. As of 2020, the majority of the Chinese submarine force is capable of firing advanced, long-range ASCMs (such as the Russian-produced SS-N-27 and domestically produced YJ-18 while submerged). China's naval strike capability against the Japanese mainland has also increased. China has held a conventional/nuclear ballistic missile capability since 1987, but that was limited to a single

⁸¹ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000."

⁸² See Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power."

⁸³ Franz-Stefan Gady, "US, Japan Conduct Amphibious Warfare Exercise – The Diplomat," accessed June 12, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/02/us-japan-conduct-amphibious-warfare-exercise/>.

⁸⁴ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000"; Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power."

XIA-class SSBN.⁸⁵ By 2010 that capability expanded with the commissioning of the JIN-class SSBN and eventually grew to four JIN-class SSBNs as of 2020.⁸⁶ China has also developed more conventional naval strike capabilities through the purchase of the LIAONING Soviet-era aircraft carrier and the domestically-built SHANDONG aircraft carrier of the same design. China still lacks an operational naval-launched LACM capability, but such a capability is in development.

d. Offensive Intentions

China's offensive intentions toward Japan have remained restrained but escalating throughout the observed time period. China has not made any indication of a desire to invade the Japanese mainland, which obviates Walt's most dramatic potential indicator of aggression. However, there has been considerable development of aggression in Chinese behaviors towards contested airspace and the contested Senkaku Islands feature. Perhaps the most concerning trend for Japanese leaders has been the rise of Chinese state-sponsored anti-Japanese nationalism that began in 1985, picked up speed in the 1990s, and then became an active feature of Chinese foreign policy beginning in 2010.⁸⁷ Since that time, high profile incidents between the two states have been exacerbated by widespread protest and outrage in China that the CCP no longer tamps down, either for political expediency or out of fear that angry nationalists could delegitimize state authority.⁸⁸ The rise of anti-Japanese nationalist rhetoric has coincided with the aforementioned increase in military provocations between China and Japan. For example, the number of times that China triggered Japan Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) fighter aircraft scrambles has consistently

⁸⁵ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2000."

⁸⁶ See U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2010," accessed May 28, 2020, https://web.archive.org/web/20150320062225/http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2010_CMPR_Final.pdf; see Defense Intelligence Agency, "China Military Power."

⁸⁷ Suisheng Zhao, "Beijing's Japan Dilemma: Balancing Nationalism, Legitimacy, and Economic Opportunity," in *Uneasy Partnerships: China's Engagement with Japan, the Koreas, and Russia in the Era of Reform*, ed. Thomas Fingar, 2017, 70–96, <https://fsi.stanford.edu/publication/uneasy-partnerships-china%E2%80%99s-engagement-japan-koreas-and-russia-era-reform>.

⁸⁸ See Zhao.

increased throughout the observed time period. The number of intercepts in a yearly period peaked in 2016 with 851, a count that has not been surpassed as of 2020. For comparison, in 2010, Chinese military aircraft triggered just 96 scrambles by the JASDF.⁸⁹ In 2019, the number of yearly scrambles had increased to 675.⁹⁰ Maritime territorial water incursions upon the contested Senkaku Islands have likewise dramatically increased, as will be discussed below.

The sole contested territorial feature between China and Japan is the Senkaku Islands, and Chinese assertions of sovereignty over the feature has increased significantly over the period. From 1989–2011, Chinese territorial water (TTW) incursions into the Senkaku Islands were relatively rare, as sometimes entire years would pass without one.⁹¹ However, beginning in September 2012 with Japan’s purchase of the islands from a Japanese citizen claiming ownership of the islands, China began an effort to routinely send Chinese Coast Guard vessels on TTW incursions as a challenge to Japanese sovereignty over the feature. These TTW incursions peaked at a rate of seventeen per month in the late 2012–2013 period and then settled down to an average rate of ten incursions per month from 2014–2020.⁹² China has stopped short of sending military forces within the contested territorial waters, but it remains a fear of Japanese policymakers that China could one day attempt to seize the islands by force. This fear of offensive intentions has been a significant factor of Japan’s security policy development over the observed time period.

2. North Korea

North Korea looms large as a long-standing feature of Japanese foreign policymaking discussion. In Walt’s terms, North Korea generates consistent threat through

⁸⁹ Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, “Playing Chicken in the East China Sea,” CSIS, accessed May 30, 2020, <https://amti.csis.org/playing-chicken-east-china-sea/>.

⁹⁰ Franz-Stefan Gady, “Japan Intercepted Chinese Military Aircraft 675 Times in Fiscal Year 2019,” accessed May 30, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/japan-intercepted-chinese-military-aircraft-675-times-in-fiscal-year-2019/>.

⁹¹ Chubb, “Xi Jinping and China’s Maritime Policy.”

⁹² Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Trends in Chinese Government and Other Vessels in the Waters Surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and Japan’s Response,” MOFA, accessed June 1, 2020, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/page23e_000021.html.

a combination of proximate power, certain offensive capabilities, and offensive intent. Its proximate power is made significant by the short 400 miles that separate it from Japan. Its offensive capabilities are manifested in a missile threat (both conventional and nuclear) and special operations activities that have a proven capability to penetrate Japanese territory. Those two sources of power are then shaped into perceived sources of threat by North Korea's ambiguous but ever-present rhetoric that signals offensive intent towards Japan. Its offensive intent is made all the more menacing due to the opacity of North Korean leadership's and the subsequent threat of an irrational actor coming to executive power.

a. Aggregate Power

Aggregate power is difficult to measure in North Korea's case, because the various measures within the larger factor are so lopsided. By measure of population, industrial capacity, and general technological prowess, North Korea's power is marginal. In 2019, North Korea had a population of 25.3 million and an estimated GDP of \$31.9 billion, in comparison to Japan's population of 126.3 million and GDP of \$5.1 trillion, which means North Korea had a 2019 GDP that was 0.6% of Japan's.⁹³ North Korea does not possess any triadic patent families, which indicates a lack of participation in high-tech development and manufacturing. On the other hand, North Korea has significant, but narrow, military capability and technological prowess in terms of its ballistic missile and nuclear weapons capability. Therefore, North Korea possesses a very narrow form of aggregate power that cannot compete with Japan's robust aggregate power in a long-term conflict (either economic or military), but could inflict withering short-term costs upon Japan's population and manufacturing base in an initial strike. By examining this situation through the lens of Balance of Threat Theory, this paper will argue that North Korea's narrowly focused forms

⁹³ Bosung Kim, "Gross Domestic Product Estimates for North Korea in 2019 | Press Releases() | News & Events | Bank of Korea," Bank of Korea, 4, accessed December 1, 2020, /eng/bbs/E0000634/view.do?nttId=10059560&menuNo=400069; World Bank, "Population, Total - Japan | Data," The World Bank Group, accessed December 1, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=JP>; World Bank, "GDP (Current US\$) - China, Japan."

of aggregate power generates a sustained high threat towards Japan when taken in combination with its proximate power, offensive capability, and offensive intent.

b. Proximate Power

In terms of proximate power, North Korea sits less than four hundred miles of open sea away from mainland Japan, at the closest point. However, North Korea only has the capability to project a limited range of destructive force across that sea.⁹⁴ It lacks any credible amphibious capability to bring a conventional ground force to Japanese shores, so an all-out land invasion of Japan remains implausible. Likewise, the North Korean Airforce is limited by serious technological, material condition, and training, and resource limitations that preclude any significant threat capability against the Japanese mainland. The North Korean Navy, too, possesses no credible capability to threaten the Japanese mainland, despite sporadic efforts to operationalize North Korea's lone GORAE class ballistic missile submarine.⁹⁵ The two significant threat capabilities that North Korea can project onto the Japanese mainland are missile attacks and special forces units, either of which could be used to transport a nuclear weapon onto Japanese soil. The details of those capabilities will be explored below.

c. Offensive Capability

The North Korea rocket force and special forces units project a threat capability onto the Japanese mainland. These capabilities have been present over the entire observed period, as North Korea first demonstrated its ability to infiltrate and Japan in the 1970s and first demonstrated its ability to strike the Japanese mainland with missiles in 1990.⁹⁶ North Korea used its infiltration capabilities to kidnap at least 17 Japanese citizens in the 1970s

⁹⁴ Kim Min-seok, "The State of the North Korean Military - Korea Net Assessment 2020: Politicized Security and Unchanging Strategic Realities," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed June 12, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/03/18/state-of-north-korean-military-pub-81232>.

⁹⁵ Min-seok.

⁹⁶ Sam Kim, "A Timeline of North Korea's Missile Launches and Nuclear Detonations," *Bloomberg*, April 16, 2017, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-16/north-korea-missile-launches-nuclear-detonations-timeline>.

and 1980s, demonstrating a capability that could be used to put special forces ashore for more destructive purposes.⁹⁷ The threat potential of both aforementioned capabilities was greatly amplified by North Korea's development of nuclear weapons. In 2006, the North executed its first successful nuclear weapons test, opening the door to the possibility of North Korean special operations forces bringing a nuclear weapon ashore to Japan. In 2016 the nuclear threat was amplified when U.S. and South Korean officials announced that North Korea potentially achieved the capability to mount a nuclear warhead onto a ballistic missile.⁹⁸ As of 2020, the South Korea Ministry of Defense estimates that North Korea possesses 10,000 ballistic missiles.⁹⁹ Although it is estimated as of 2019 that North Korea possesses only 10–20 nuclear warheads (with enough fissile material to produce 60 total), it would be impossible for Japan's ballistic missile defenses to identify the nuclear-tipped missiles within a larger salvo of conventional ballistic missiles targeting Japan.¹⁰⁰ The development of that ballistic missile threat exerted considerable pressure on Japan over the observed time period to incorporate a ballistic missile defense role within its security policy. However, as Hughes discusses, Japan's ballistic missile defenses can be just-as-well applied towards defense against Chinese ballistic missile attacks.

d. Offensive Intentions

North Korea's offensive intentions are difficult to read, if only because it has made frequent bellicose threats of imminent destruction against Japan, South Korea, and the United States for decades.¹⁰¹ Moreover, North Korea has previously demonstrated

⁹⁷ Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea," MOFA, accessed June 10, 2020, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/abduction/index.html.

⁹⁸ Jack Kim, "North Korea Can Put Nuclear Warhead on Mid-Range Missile: South," *Reuters*, April 5, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-nuclear-idUSKCN0X21EM>.

⁹⁹ Kim Min-seok, "The State of the North Korean Military - Korea Net Assessment 2020: Politicized Security and Unchanging Strategic Realities," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/03/18/state-of-north-korean-military-pub-81232>.

¹⁰⁰ International Panel on Fissile Materials, "North Korea - Fissile Material," International Panel on Fissile Materials, accessed December 1, 2020, http://fissilematerials.org/countries/north_korea.html.

¹⁰¹ Jack Kim and Kiyoshi Takenaka, "North Korea Threatens to 'sink' Japan, Reduce U.S. to 'Ashes and Darkness,'" *Reuters*, September 14, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-idUSKCN1BP0F3>.

material aggression against Japan through the aforementioned abduction programs of the 1970s-1980s and the fly-over of a ballistic missile test in 1998 and 2017. Still, while North Korea's broader threats of missile barrages and nuclear destruction have not come to pass during the observed period, Japanese policymakers have come to view North Korea as progressively more threatening over the period.¹⁰² Japanese policymakers and media have perceived North Korea's demonstrations of capability to violate Japanese territory and airspace, along with a rising trend of verbal threats, as an indication of rising offensive intent.¹⁰³

The intensity of the threats, an increasing capability to make good on them, and the uncertainties of dealing with such a closed state are reason enough for Japanese leadership to invoke North Korea's potential offensive intentions as a threat to Japan's security.¹⁰⁴ The most dangerous concern is the possibility that a rapidly destabilizing North Korean regime could launch a catastrophic but ultimately irrational ballistic missile attack against the Japanese mainland, even if North Korea lacks the capability to meaningfully profit from the attack. North Korea's ambiguous offensive intentions are a widely cited reason for Japanese security policy development.¹⁰⁵

3. The United States

a. Security Force Presence

The U.S. has maintained a continuous military presence within Japan that pre-dates the observed time period by 44 years. U.S. military presence has influenced Japanese security policy development in two important ways. First, the continuous presence of the only forward-deployed US-carrier and carrier air wing has reduced (but not eliminated)

¹⁰² Mataka Kamiya, "A Disillusioned Japan Confronts North Korea | Arms Control Association," Arms Control Association, accessed December 1, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003-05/features/disillusioned-japan-confronts-north-korea>.

¹⁰³ Kamiya.

¹⁰⁴ Mari Yamaguchi, "Abe Fears US-NKorea Talks Will Omit Japan Security Concerns," AP NEWS, March 28, 2018, <https://apnews.com/article/a5ae93a971f1450b89d9fee1a2584ac8>.

¹⁰⁵ See Hughes, "'Super-Sizing' the DPRK Threat."

Japan's need for indigenous security force deterrent by simultaneously providing a force presence and symbolic indication of U.S. resolve to defend Japan's territory. Second, Oros argues that U.S. forces' more aggressive rules of engagement (relative to Japan) have helped to shape the JSDF to act as the "shield" in relation to the U.S. "sword."¹⁰⁶ U.S. military presence in Japan has not changed significantly over the observed time period. Of particular significance in this discussion is the US' role in providing a nuclear umbrella for Japan. As a result of defense commitments that emerged following China's achievement of nuclear weapons capability in 1964, the U.S. has maintained an extended nuclear deterrence guarantee that any nuclear weapons attack against Japan will be met with a response from the U.S. nuclear arsenal.¹⁰⁷ This guarantee has provided Japan with an indirect nuclear deterrent that, so long as viewed to be credible, obviates the need for Japan to develop a unilateral nuclear weapons capability. The credibility of the US' guarantee has been and continues to be the subject of ongoing discussion and debate, not least of which among Japanese scholars and policymakers.¹⁰⁸ After all, the prospect that the U.S. would willingly enter an all-out mutually destructive nuclear war in the name of upholding its commitment of retribution for an attack against Japan is a situation that has not been put to the test. Nevertheless, the Japanese government consistently cited the U.S. nuclear umbrella as the foundation of its nuclear deterrence policy throughout the period.¹⁰⁹ The long-term presence of the guarantee has been a sub-factor that provides external deterrent balancing power and thus reduces the pull towards militarization in Japanese security policy.

¹⁰⁶ Andrew Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance: New Policies and Politics for the Twenty-First-Century*, Contemporary Asia in the World (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 72.

¹⁰⁷ Fintan Hoey, "Japan and Extended Nuclear Deterrence: Security and Non-Proliferation," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 4 (June 6, 2016): 491–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2016.1168010>.

¹⁰⁸ Fumihiko Yoshida, "Japan Should Scrutinise the Credibility of the U.S. Nuclear Umbrella: An Interview with Shigeru Ishiba," *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament* 1, no. 2 (July 3, 2018): 464–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/25751654.2018.1507414>.

¹⁰⁹ Yukio Satoh, "U.S. Extended Deterrence and Japan's Security," Livermore Papers on Global Security (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory: Center for Global Security Research, October 2017), <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/research/livermore-papers>.

b. U.S. Diplomacy

Beginning in the 1980s, U.S. diplomacy towards Japan increasingly pressured Japanese security policy towards increased burden-sharing within the U.S.-Japan alliance.¹¹⁰ As Smith notes, during the Cold War, U.S. diplomacy was focused on financial burden-sharing so that the U.S. could focus its resources elsewhere against the Soviet Union. However, the intensity of this factor increased during the observed time period and manifested as requests for force modernization, force growth, and force role developments. Smith discusses how, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001, the U.S. pressured Japan to take on a more significant global security role, both in the defense of Japan itself and as a participant in US-led coalitions efforts in the Middle East. While Japan had previously taken tentative steps toward such participation by deploying minesweepers in the Korean War and following the conclusion of Desert Storm, the U.S. regarded these efforts as too little, too late.¹¹¹ The U.S. desired Japan to take on more significant roles where its personnel were sharing in the hardship and risk of other coalition forces. Since 2001, the U.S. has repeatedly pressured Japan to increase its military capabilities, expand its contributions to regional security, and to engage in global efforts to uphold international norms.¹¹² However, Japan has remained wary of the US' initiatives to compete and risk conflict with China, and there is significant concern among Japanese policymakers that Japan could be dragged into a costly Sino-US conflict that it does not want.¹¹³ The diplomatic factors of direct pressure from the U.S., fears of abandonment, and fears of entrapment all push in favor of further unilateral militarization to achieve the outcome of increased Japanese security.

¹¹⁰ Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, 2019, 57–61.

¹¹¹ Smith, 70–73.

¹¹² Smith, 176.

¹¹³ Smith, 205.

B. INTERNAL FACTORS

1. Antimilitarist Norms

Japan features strong antimilitarist norms that emerged following the close of World War II and persist to this day. The impact of these norms upon contemporary Japan security policy outcomes is debated, but it is widely accepted that Japan's antimilitarist norms emerged for two reasons. First, a recognition of the Imperial Japanese military's role in drawing Japan into World War II and its disastrous outcome. Second, the overriding U.S. influence over the post-war Japanese constitution that was purposefully designed to reject the use of force to achieve political ends. Japanese media outlets, political elites, and protestors alike paid frequent deference to these norms as being centrally connected to the core of modern Japanese identity throughout the period. However, the progression of security policy development illustrates that these antimilitary norms were not capable of outright stopping security policy development throughout the period. In the face of the external pressures discussed previously, Japanese security policy did move towards increased capability and force projection. Nevertheless, norms stand out as a likely factor in explaining the gap between the vast increase in Japan's external threats and the comparatively restrained balancing response.

The domestic popularity of antimilitary norms over the period has remained remarkably stable.¹¹⁴ Miyashita explores the issue through extensive polling data analysis which shows that, despite fluctuations that occurred as a result of then-current perceived threats to security, the broader trend is that the domestic popularity of Japan's antiwar norms have held, and in some cases strengthened, over the period. On top of domestic popularity, the staying power of Japan's antiwar norms is reinforced by the fact that they are legally enshrined within the post-war Japanese constitution. The issue is dealt with most explicitly, but not exclusively, within Japan Constitution Article 9. Official discussion of security policy is always conducted in the context of Article 9's specific verbiage, and so it bears quoting here:

¹¹⁴ See Miyashita, "Where Do Norms Come From?"

1. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.
2. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.¹¹⁵

As a result of Article 9 and similarly normative passages, antiwar norms are institutionally reinforced with each generation as Japanese students are taught about the guiding principles of their country. Antimilitary norms are strengthened at the elite level by the fact that many members of the conservative LDP are themselves adherents of antimilitary norms, thereby reinforcing the policy braking mechanism even when the LDP holds uncontested legislative power. Moreover, the constitution mandates a 2/3rds majority vote from a nation-wide referendum for any formal constitutional amendments, which has so far precluded even the most hawkish ruling elites from achieving a definite revision to Article 9.

2. Suspicion of Revisionists

Widespread public distrust towards the long-term ambitions of revisionist politicians has negatively colored public perception of their associated security policy development initiatives.¹¹⁶ Conservative revisionists are associated with an unpopular package of ideologies that aim to, in addition to strengthening the military, downplay the atrocities Japan committed during World War II, reduce individualism in society in favor of nationalist commitments, reject western cultural influences, embrace traditional Japanese values and religion, and take a more assertive position for Japan on the world stage. All of these positions are decidedly unpopular with Japanese voters, not to mention regional neighbors and trade partners, who fear that a strengthened military risks empowering the revisionists to seize control of Japanese society.¹¹⁷ Such control, it is

¹¹⁵ See Umeda, “Japan.”

¹¹⁶ Suzuki and Wallace, “Explaining Japan’s Response to Geopolitical Vulnerability,” 726–28.

¹¹⁷ Suzuki and Wallace, 728; Asahi Shimbun, “Pollster Questions and Answers,” Asahi Shimbun, accessed December 1, 2020, <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASK4P5FJ0K4PUZPS00F.html>.

feared, could draw Japan into the same sort of devastating adventurism and conflicts that are remembered so acutely from World War II.

This factor was especially pronounced during the 2012–2020 Abe administration, when Prime Minister Abe, well known for his revisionist and nationalist ideas, unsuccessfully pushed for a formal revision to constitution Article 9 throughout his time in office.¹¹⁸ Being a revisionist, his ideology contributed to resistance by a Japanese populace that regarded his motives with suspicion. As an illustration of this effect, consider that in 2003, 54% of respondents to a Yomiuri Shimbun poll supported revising the constitution.¹¹⁹ By early 2020, only 27% of respondents to an Asahi Shimbun poll supported a revision to Article 9.¹²⁰ Therefore, Abe’s second tenure as Prime Minister from 2012–2020 correlates with the decline in popular support. Abe was able to enact a legislative reinterpretation of Article 9, which sidestepped the popular vote and drew heavy protests throughout Japan but was ultimately prevented from accomplishing his goal of a formal revision. As such, the predominant attitude of suspicion towards revisionists was sufficient over the observed period to prevent a successful constitutional revision. It remains to be seen whether a more liberal-minded political elite would find a broader reception to security policy development and constitutional revision without triggering voter fears that are anchored on antimilitarist norms.

3. Single-Party Dominance

Japan’s current ruling party, the LDP, has ruled Japan nearly continuously for all but five years since 1955. The LDP has achieved its marked longevity by engaging in extensive compensation politics with vast swaths of the Japanese economy, integrating itself into permanent relationships with a state economic bureaucracies and businesses, and

¹¹⁸ Linda Sieg, “Abe’s Mission Unaccomplished: Pushing to Revise Japan’s Pacifist Charter,” *Reuters*, November 13, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-abe-legacy-analysis-idUSKBN1XN089>.

¹¹⁹ Miyashita, “Where Do Norms Come From?,” 100.

¹²⁰ Asahi Shimbun, “Asahi Survey: 72% Say No Rush for Diet to Revise Constitution,” *Asahi Shimbun*, accessed September 9, 2020, <http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/13347656>.

remaining ideologically flexible in the face of changing public opinion.¹²¹ As a result, the LDP is an ideologically diluted organization which is generally not beholden to specific party policy lines.¹²² The resulting electoral structure places the LDP so securely in power that its party elites are given significant latitude to pursue gradual security policy initiatives so long as they do not cross the normative thresholds that could trigger an electoral backlash against the regime. Barring such a backlash, parliamentary elections over the observed period were decided primarily on domestic issues and platforms. Even the two power transition elections of 1993 and 2009 were decided on primarily domestic platforms. As such, this factor removes some of the policy-influencing teeth that norms would otherwise carry, and pushed, to a limited degree, in favor of increased security policy development over the observed period.

The significance of Japan's single-party dominance is increased further due to the fact that the LDP has internally drifted more towards hawkishness and revisionism beginning in the early 2000s and then accelerating under Abe's tenure as Prime Minister. Samuels discusses how the LDP's pragmatists were gradually forced out by the revisionists, who carried with them a more hawkish security policy agenda.¹²³ Shibuichi observes that there has been a significant growth in Diet legislator membership in the far-right political organization Nippon Kaigi since its foundation. Between 1997 and 2015, Diet legislator membership in the group expanded from 204 to 289.¹²⁴ The modest increase in members appears to reflect a shift towards right-wing LDP membership, but Shibuichi cautions that many legislative members report to have joined purely out of a desire to support Abe and be looked upon favorably by his administration, rather than possessing a strong ideological affinity to the organization.

¹²¹ T. J. Pempel and Keiichi Tsunekawa, *Two Crises, Different Outcomes: East Asia and Global Finance*, 1st ed., Cornell Studies in Political Economy (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Cornell UnivPress, 2015), 191–92, <https://doi.org/10.7591/j.ctt1287c8x>.

¹²² T. J. Pempel and Keiichi Tsunekawa, 214.

¹²³ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 128.

¹²⁴ Daiki Shibuichi, "The Japan Conference (Nippon Kaigi): An Elusive Conglomerate," *East Asia : An International Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (September 2017): 183, <http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.nps.edu/10.1007/s12140-017-9274-1>.

4. Prime Minister Preferences

As a result of Japan's tendency toward single-party dominance, the individual preferences of Prime Ministers have the potential to be especially significant for security policymaking outcomes. Prime Ministers who successfully consolidate power around themselves can obtain wide latitude for shaping foreign policy. So long as they avoid crossing the threshold necessary to spark meaningful voter outrage that could threaten the elected party majority, the only effective opposition is from their elected peers within the LDP. This factor works upon the same mechanism as the previous factor, suspicion of revisionists, but it weakens the other's effect and has the possibility of pulling in the opposite direction. As the foremost example of this, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stood out with his preference to see Japan return to the world stage as a significant power.¹²⁵ His efforts to achieve those ends have contributed to shifts in Japanese security policy development toward the development of lethal force projection capabilities (if not intent) beyond Japan's local waters. However, the previously discussed popular suspicion of revisionist politics, in combination with a longstanding popular preference against alteration of Article 9, prevented Abe's policy initiative from coming to fruition. During Abe's resignation announcement in 2020, he expressed regret for failing to achieve his goal of Article 9 revision, underlining both the personal importance and yet inaccessibility of the issue.¹²⁶

The strength and policymaking vector of this factor depends upon the Prime Minister in power. Abe's second tenure stood out for its longevity and therefore its ability to take advantage of this factor. This was in stark contrast to almost all of the other Japanese Prime Ministers during the observed period. Of the others, Junichiro Koizumi was the only other Prime Minister within the period to hold office for more than two years, which occurred from 2001–2005. Not coincidentally, Koizumi led significant efforts to expand the responsibilities and capabilities of the JSDF. As discussed in the trajectory chapter, he

¹²⁵ Brad Glosserman, *Peak Japan The End of Great Ambitions*, Book Collections on Project MUSE. (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 181–82.

¹²⁶ Mari Yamaguchi, "Abe Says 'gut Wrenching' Resignation Leaves Goals Unfinished," Associated Press, August 28, 2020, <https://apnews.com/23a3685932db83a826360280e5e5435f>.

obtained the legislative authority to deploy the JMSDF on long-term international resupply operations and deployed the JGSDF to Iraq, all in support of the U.S. coalition efforts in the Middle East.

C. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The highlighted developments to Japanese security policy illustrate the highly correlative, if not definitively causal, relationship that external and internal factors have upon Japan's security policy outcomes. External factors such as the U.S. presence, U.S. diplomacy, Chinese threat, and North Korean threat have expanded the bounds of feasible policy responses throughout the observed time period by, in aggregate, increasing perceived security threat against Japan. Internal factors such as antiwar norms, political stagnation, suspicion of revisionists, and prime minister preferences then exerted force within those externally established bounds to create the observed security policy outcomes. Individual elements of the external and internal factors do not uniformly push for or against Japanese security policy development. However, it is still fair to say that the observed *preponderance* of external factors pushed toward security policy development while the *preponderance* of internal factors acted as a brake against it. Therefore, the explanation appears to fit the observed trajectory over the period. Security policy development trended toward militarization, but at a rate that was not commensurate to the overwhelmingly large increase in threat. The preponderant influence of internal factors appears to explain the subdued policy outcome that diverged from the preponderance of external factors being viewed within the framework of Walt's Balance of Threat Theory.

It must be caveated that, while aggregated total effect of internal factors did act as a brake upon the predominate militarization trajectory over the period, the individual internal factors that push in support of further militarization are powerful in their own right. Under the right conditions, the aggregate balance of policy directional "push" could be tipped in the other direction, so that internal factors end up, in aggregate, pushing toward militarization rather than against it. As noted in the foregoing paragraphs, the internal factor of single party dominance by the LDP, combined with the LDP's ideological drift towards hawkish policy, pushes towards security policy development. Prime ministerial

preferences have the potential to push for or against security policy development, depending upon the preferences and powers of a given prime minister. Importantly, the “suspicion of revisionists” factor only pushes against security policy development so long as security policy development is seen as connected to revisionist agendas. If non-revisionists establish a platform of security policy development for non-revisionist reasons, suspicion of revisionists could lose its teeth in resisting further security policy development. All of which is to say that the fact that internal factors, as a category, have slowed militarization is a situational outcome that could very well shift to support militarization if a non-revisionist Prime Minister consolidated power and pushed strongly in that direction. These possibilities will be explored in the next chapter, as this thesis discusses future factor durability.

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IV. FACTOR DURABILITY

In the preceding chapters, this thesis established an observed trajectory of Japan's security policy development and argued in favor of the significant factors that drove that trajectory. External factors have predominately, although not exclusively, driven Japan's security policy development toward internal and external balancing. However, the degree of balancing responses has been significantly smaller than the degree of external threat growth being generated by China, North Korea, and Russia over the period. The explanatory gap in degree of security policy response is plausibly filled by examining internal factors, which appear to have a powerful effect on modulating Japanese security policy outcomes. Those internal factors predominately, but not exclusively, push against internal and external balancing efforts. The resulting trajectory appears to be that Japan's security policy development has been slowed, but not stopped, by internal factors.

This chapter will assess the possible future endurance of the operating factors that decided on the security policy outcomes over the observed period, and attempt to look forward into plausible trajectories for future security policy development within Japan.

First, it must be caveated that a future trajectory assessment is contingent upon the possibility that current trends hold. Attempting to make *precise* assessment of future policies is a fool's errand because an unforeseeable change to one of the underlying factors, or the introduction of a new one, will necessarily have a dramatic effect upon the future trajectory. As a particularly poignant example, no one on September 10, 2001, would have assessed the U.S. as being likely to invade Afghanistan one month later. Instead, this thesis seeks to make an *accurate* assessment of probable broad policy trajectory direction based upon the factors observed. Such an assessed trajectory has value, even if significant variables change, fall out, or are newly introduced, because the remaining factors of more stalwart character will continue to exert systemic influence upon the newly altered trajectory.

A. EXTERNAL FACTORS

External threat factors are likely to endure, at a minimum, and likely increase. By measure of aggregate power, China's tremendous economic growth has slowed over the period but remains exceptionally strong in comparison to Japan and the United States. To put the growth disparity in perspective, China has averaged 9.2% year-on-year GDP growth over the entire period, and in 2019 featured 6.1% GDP growth.¹²⁷ In comparison, Japan has averaged 1.2% over the period and finished 2019 with a meager 0.65% GDP growth. The U.S. fared better, averaging 2.5% over the period and finishing 2019 with 2.3%, but still did not come close to China's growth rate. A significant part of the trend can be explained as the continuing benefits of a developmental economy that will eventually run out, but for now the greater-than thirty years of consistent data suggest that the trend is likely to continue into the next decade at the very least. The picture looks even more dire when factoring in the still-developing 2020 data, in which the tumultuous economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic have ravaged most of the world's economies but left China on an apparent trajectory to meet or exceed their 2019 GDP growth percentage. For comparison, the Q3 2020 GDP growth numbers are: 4.9% China, 1.3% Japan, and 1.8% U.S. compared to GDP in the same quarter last year.

The future trajectory of military power disparity appears to likewise favor a continued rising threat of offensive capability towards Japan. From 2000–2020, China's total military budget rose at an average growth rate of 10.2%, only slightly outpacing the country's GDP growth rate over the same period (9.1%).¹²⁸ The Chinese announcement

¹²⁷ World Bank, "GDP Growth (Annual %) - China, Japan, United States | Data," World Bank, accessed October 19, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2019&locations=CN-JP-US&start=1989>.

¹²⁸ CSIS, "What Does China Really Spend on Its Military?"; World Bank, "GDP Growth (Annual %) - China, Japan, United States | Data"; creator, "Economy Comes to a near Standstill in Q3," FocusEconomics | Economic Forecasts from the World's Leading Economists, November 18, 2019, <https://www.focus-economics.com/countries/japan/news/gdp/economy-comes-to-a-near-standstill-in-q3>; "Gross Domestic Product, Third Quarter 2019 (Third Estimate); Corporate Profits, Third Quarter 2019 (Revised Estimate) | U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)," accessed November 4, 2020, <https://www.bea.gov/news/2019/gross-domestic-product-third-quarter-2019-third-estimate-corporate-profits-third-quarter>; "Gross Domestic Product, Third Quarter 2020 (Advance Estimate) | U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)," accessed November 4, 2020, <https://www.bea.gov/news/2020/gross-domestic-product-third-quarter-2020-advance-estimate>.

for official military budget growth in 2020 shrank to 6.6%, which appears to be a reflection of the corresponding reduction of economic growth due to the pandemic. Japan's military spending similarly tracks with its economic growth based upon the informal principle of spending approximately 1% of GDP on defense, and so the combined 31-year trend of increasing disparity of military spending appears likely to continue.¹²⁹ By proxy, China's relative capability for generating threat based on offensive capability is also likely to continue until the underlying factors change.

The future development of perceived Chinese offensive intent towards Japan is less clear. By measure of assertiveness over the contested Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, China could be seen as continuing to increase tensions. On November 2nd, 2020, Chinese Coast Guard vessels entered the islands' contiguous zone for the 283rd (not consecutive) day this year, setting a new record for number of annual visits with two months left to push that number higher.¹³⁰ However, territorial water incursions of those same islands are actually slightly down in 2020, with 8.25 incursions per month compared to an average of 10.5 incursions per month in 2019 and well below the high-water mark of 17.38 incursions per month during the height of the Senkaku Islands crisis from September 2012 to September 2013.¹³¹ On the other hand, China is diplomatically positioning itself for a positive relationship with Japan's Suga administration. On September 25th, Japanese Prime Minister Suga held a teleconference with Xi Jinping to establish first-contact between the leaders of the two states. During the conversation, Xi said that China hopes for a "cooperative partnership" with Japan, signifying a continuing usage of the term since it was first established in 2018.¹³² The partnership attitude focuses on continued recognition of the "Four Basic Documents" that underpin modern Sino-Japanese relations, as well as mutual interests on

¹²⁹ World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP) - Japan | Data."

¹³⁰ Japan Times, "Chinese Ships Spotted near Senkakus for Record Number of Days," Japan Times, November 2, 2020, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/11/02/national/china-japan-senkakus-record/>.

¹³¹ Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Trends in Chinese Government and Other Vessels in the Waters Surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and Japan's Response."

¹³² Shin Kawashima, "The Japan-China Summit Telephone Conference," The Diplomat, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/the-japan-china-summit-telephone-conference/>.

free trade and regional stability.¹³³ Narratives of the rest of the teleconference content differ between Japanese and Chinese reporting, but for our purposes it is sufficient to say that China is opening the new chapter of Sino-Japanese relations by exploring options for cooperation without escalating contention.

North Korea's outlook for future level of threat to Japan continues to trend higher as a result of its continued pursuit of increasingly capable nuclear offensive capabilities, enduring offensive rhetoric, and the long-standing specter of future regime instability. Measures of aggregate power, meanwhile, are stagnant. The balance of aggregate power continues to overwhelmingly favor Japan because the size of North Korea's economy remains dwarfed by Japan's.¹³⁴ As strict US-led international economic sanctions against North Korea continue, there is no reason at this time to expect a significant change to this factor in the near term. North Korean offensive intent remains a high threat factor due to aggressive rhetoric and fears of regime instability that are compounded by Japan's proximity to the potentially unstable nuclear-armed state. North Korea's long-standing drumbeat of hostile rhetoric towards Japan, interspersed with occasional direct threats of nuclear attack, has created a sustained tone of hostility and is suggestive of offensive intent. However, such threats are a familiar feature of Japan-North Korea relations, with little action to match the intense rhetoric. North Korea has not made significant commentary recently to indicate an escalation of their underlying foreign policy, which since 2019 has been confined to typical insults and vague threats.¹³⁵

Japan's enduring perception of offensive intent threat is amplified by the North Korean regime's opacity to external observation and apparent near-total concentration of power around Kim Jong-un.¹³⁶ The combination of the two raises the constant specter of

¹³³ Shin Kawashima, "45 Years of Normalized Sino-Japanese Diplomacy," *The Diplomat*, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/09/45-years-of-normalized-sino-japanese-diplomacy/>.

¹³⁴ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "DPRK GDP at Current Prices: 1970–2018," United Nations, accessed November 16, 2020, <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/Basic>.

¹³⁵ BBC, "North Korea Threatens Japan with 'Real Ballistic Missile,'" *BBC News*, November 30, 2019, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50613051>.

¹³⁶ Patrick McEachern, "Centralizing North Korean Policymaking under Kim Jong Un," *Asian Perspective* 43, no. 1 (2019): 35–67, <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2019.0001>.

sudden regime irrationality or instability that could result in the use of a nuclear weapon against Japan. As a result, the future threat impacts of North Korea's offensive intent appear likely to endure so long as the current regime of North Korea remains in power. The one area where North Korea's trajectory of threat growth towards Japan is clearly observable is offensive capability. North Korea has so far abided by a 2018 moratorium on nuclear weapons tests and inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) test launches while negotiations with the U.S. were ongoing, but in January 2020 Kim Jong-un announced that North Korea would no longer consider itself bound by the terms of the moratorium.¹³⁷ Most directly as a threat to Japan, North Korea continues to increase the quantity and quality of its nuclear weapons delivery systems. The latest, most direct indicator of this factor's continued growth trajectory is the unveiling of North Korea's new Hwasong-16 ICBM, a much larger missile than its predecessors, which has been speculated by South Korean intelligence agencies and international analysts as being possibly designed to accommodate multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV).¹³⁸ Whether this particular missile platform accommodates that development or not, the technological development path for nuclear weapons is clear and North Korea has given no indication that it is likely to cease its progression along it. As the number and capability of viable launch platforms and warheads increases, it strengthens the credibility of its capability to overwhelm Japan's ballistic missile defenses in an all-out strike.¹³⁹

U.S. security force presence durability appears likely to endure as a significant factor for the foreseeable future. A recent point of evidence in favor of this assessment is that, despite contentious demands made by President Trump in 2019 for Japan to quadruple its payments to the U.S. in exchange for force presence, the Trump administration was

¹³⁷ BBC, "North Korea Threatens to Resume Nuclear and ICBM Testing," *BBC News*, January 1, 2020, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50962768>.

¹³⁸ Elizabeth Shim, "North Korea's 'new Strategic Weapon' Could Be MIRV, Report Says," UPI, accessed November 16, 2020, https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2020/01/07/North-Koreas-new-strategic-weapon-could-be-MIRV-report-says/7401578412749/.

¹³⁹ Shim; Michael Elleman, "Does Size Matter? North Korea's Newest ICBM | 38 North: Informed Analysis of North Korea," 38 North, October 21, 2020, <https://www.38north.org/2020/10/melleman102120/>; Markus Garlauskas, "We Must Prevent North Korea from Testing Multiple Reentry Vehicles," CSIS: Beyond Parallel, November 5, 2020, <https://beyondparallel.csis.org/we-must-prevent-north-korea-from-testing-multiple-re-entry-vehicles/>.

unwilling to directly propose force withdrawal as a bargaining chip.¹⁴⁰ Speculation exists from Trump's former National Security Advisor, John Bolton, that Trump privately desired a force withdrawal from Japan, in addition to his more open desires to withdraw from Korea and Europe.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, the fact that even President Trump, as bombastic and ideologically skeptical of U.S. alliances as he was, was unwilling to raise the specter of force withdrawal from Japan is indicative of the entrenched U.S. interests that keep such a move off the bargaining table. Now that the U.S. has concluded its 2020 presidential election with a victory for Joe Biden, a stated alliance builder and globalist, there is good reason to believe that the offer of status quo of U.S. force presence in Japan is very likely to endure for at least the next four years. Within Japan's own government, the newly appointed Prime Minister Suga has reaffirmed his predecessor's commitment to the U.S.-Japan alliance, and no significant national political parties are currently challenging that position. However, the caveat that must be made that commitments to U.S. force presence in Japan are especially vulnerable to dramatic shifts in executive leadership policy from either the U.S. or Japan. So, while acknowledging the potential for future factor instability beyond the next administration, it can be concluded that all observed factors of the present point towards an enduring U.S. presence that will continue to reduce Japan's need to internally balance.

U.S. diplomacy towards Japan has been less stable than force presence in recent years, as the aforementioned U.S. complaints of insufficient financial burden sharing from Japan stoked the ever-present fears of abandonment among Japanese policymakers. Those fears were at least partially assuaged by public conversations between Trump and Abe in 2017, when Trump provided assurances that the U.S. remained fully committed to the security alliance and that concerns over finances were not indicative of broader wavering

¹⁴⁰ Sam Nussey, "Trump Asks Japan to Hike Payments for U.S. Troops to \$8 Billion: Foreign Policy," *Reuters*, November 16, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-usa-idUSKBN1XQ06F>.

¹⁴¹ Japan Times, "Higher Risk of U.S. Withdrawal from Japan If Trump Re-Elected: John Bolton," *The Japan Times*, July 22, 2020, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/22/national/politics-diplomacy/higher-risk-u-s-withdrawal-japan-trump-re-elected-john-bolton/>.

to U.S. commitment.¹⁴² However such concerns increase the long-term intensity and credibility of voices within the Japanese government that fear abandonment. After all, even if this particular U.S. president was not willing to go so far as publicly state a desire to withdraw from the region, a successive U.S. populist President could. In the near-term, the new Biden administration appears to intend on assuaging these fears, as the President-elect was reportedly quick to assure Suga that “he looks forward to strengthening the U.S.-Japan alliance and working together on achieving a free and open Indo-Pacific.”¹⁴³ The intentions of current U.S. presidential administrations are also only the most recent contributors to long-standing discussions in Japanese policy regarding the potential liabilities within the U.S.-Japan alliance. As discussed in Chapter 3, there are concerns that, as the regional stakes become higher for the U.S. due to China’s rise and North Korea’s nuclearization, the risks increase that Japan could be entrapped or abandoned by U.S. decisions informed by U.S. interests. The only way that Japan can alleviate such fears is through the development of increased unilateral deterrent capabilities. As a result, the degree to which this factor will influence future security policy is highly variable based on situation and personalities, but the vector of its security policy influence will remain pointed toward increased militarization.

B. INTERNAL FACTORS

Japan’s antiwar norms are a stable factor in the general sense of their persistence over time, but Miyashita demonstrated through opinion polls that the Japanese public’s commitment to them was measurably influenced by the security threats facing Japan at the time.¹⁴⁴ Such an observation aligns with this paper’s hypothesis that, while internal factors like antiwar norms have considerable room to shift, it is the external factor realities that set the bounds of feasibility. In this case, the antiwar norms appear to be an ideal that the

¹⁴² Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Peter Baker, “In Welcoming Shinzo Abe, Trump Affirms U.S. Commitment to Defending Japan (Published 2017),” *The New York Times*, February 10, 2017, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/10/world/asia/trump-shinzo-abe-meeting.html>.

¹⁴³ Adam Taylor and Siobhán O’Grady, “What We Know about President-Elect Biden’s Phone Calls with World Leaders,” *Washington Post*, accessed December 2, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/11/12/biden-election-2020-world-leader-phone-calls/>.

¹⁴⁴ See Miyashita, “Where Do Norms Come From?”

Japanese public will accept a significant, if finite, amount of security risk to achieve, but will progressively reduce commitment to those norms as threat increases. The external threat factors are likely to continue increasing, will likely weaken the public's (and subsequently the policymakers') commitment to antiwar norms. Therefore, this paper concludes that antiwar norms will likely remain as a strong-but-diminishing internal factor that will resist further militarization in Japanese security policy development.

Internal distrust of revisionists is subject to dynamic political change and preferences, but the policy-influencing potential of this factor is only as strong as the perceived connection between prospective security policy developments and the revisionist ideology. For example, if Suga, who is not known to be an ideological revisionist, were to gain traction and introduce security policy developments of his own design, he may find less resistance from the political bodies that so fiercely resisted Abe's security policy developments due to suspicion of his revisionist motives. It may be the case that a more ideologically-neutral figure like Suga is able to win support for his policies on the basis of pragmatism, but that remains speculative. It is safe to say that distrust of revisionists can be expected to continue its current vector as a factor that resists militarization, but the degree to which this factor affects policy outcomes is highly dependent upon the revisionist ideal (or lack thereof) of Japanese executives and legislators.

The future effects of the prime minister preferences factor are in flux at the time of this writing. Yoshihide Suga succeeded Shinzo Abe as Prime Minister of Japan on September 14, 2020. The ensuing policy direction, effectiveness, and longevity of his rule remain to be seen. Nevertheless, some preliminary assessments can be made based upon Suga's background. In terms of policy preferences, Suga has built his career as a member of the conservative LDP, but has never shown a proclivity for nationalist ideals.¹⁴⁵ Suga has made his career as a conservative pragmatist, more concerned with policy effects upon the lives of ordinary Japanese citizens than achieving dramatic goals of a particular

¹⁴⁵ Sandy Tolliver, "Five Ways in Which Japan's New Prime Minister Suga Is Different from Abe," Text, The Hill, September 20, 2020, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/516984-five-ways-in-which-japans-new-prime-minister-suga-is-different-from-abe>.

ideology.¹⁴⁶ He is also the first LDP leader who is not a member of one of the LDP's internal factions, which further removes him from the ideologically-driven background of his predecessor. On the other hand, he is anything-but a political outsider. Suga first achieved elected office in 1987 as a member of the Yokohama City Council, became a Diet member in 1996, developed a close relationship with Shinzo Abe soon after, and has been serving as Abe's Chief Cabinet Secretary since 2012. He was viewed by many as Abe's right-hand-man throughout Abe's tenure as Prime Minister.¹⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, he has broadly pledged to carry on Abe's policy goals in areas of economics, security, and constitutional revision. The prospective longevity of Suga's leadership has been called into question by many Japanese political commentators who believe that Suga was chosen as the safest continuity candidate to hold the course as an interim government in the lead-up to the scheduled 2021 general elections.¹⁴⁸ The final months of 2020 and the lead-up to the 2021 election will be crucial, then, for observing and assessing whether Suga has the will and capacity to meaningfully influence Japan's security policy trajectory. Without knowing who the Prime Minister will be after 2021, or their accompanying policy positions, this factor's vector and degree are currently assessed as unknown.

¹⁴⁶ Tolliver.

¹⁴⁷ BBC, "Yoshihide Suga: The 'Right-Hand Man' Became Japan's PM," *BBC News*, September 16, 2020, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-54143029>.

¹⁴⁸ BBC, "Yoshihide Suga Picked by Japan's Governing Party to Succeed Shinzo Abe," *BBC News*, September 14, 2020, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-54070281>.

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V. CONCLUSION

This thesis draws four primary conclusions. First, that Japan has maintained a consistent, but limited, security policy trajectory towards militarization over the observed period from 1989–2020. Second, that the observed trajectory is being driven by an interaction between external factors (China threat, North Korea threat, U.S. force presence, and U.S. diplomacy) and internal factors (antiwar norms, suspicion of revisionists, single-party dominance, and prime minister preferences). Third, that the factors driving Japan’s security policy trajectory towards militarization are currently durable in both vector and degree, while the factors resisting further militarization are situationally malleable. Fourth, and finally, that Japan is likely to remain on a long-term trajectory towards further militarization, in which Japanese technological and legal capability for use of force will continue to expand.

Over the observed period, Japan maintained a consistent trajectory towards limited increased military capability, both in legal and material terms. However, the rate and degree of change was disproportionate to the sharply rising level of threat generated by China and North Korea. Japan established and exercised new conditions in which its forces could be deployed abroad, albeit in a still-nonviolent capacity. Constitutional reinterpretation allowed for the creation of the collective self-defense policy, expanding the scenarios in which Japanese Self Defense Force could use lethal force to defend an ally in conflict.¹⁴⁹ In the material realm, the acquisition of new weapons and platforms, such as the Aegis ballistic missile defense system, F-35 Joint Strike fighters with standoff munitions, a small carrier to launch fighters overseas, and a modest amphibious force designed for island assault, all indicate toward a coherent desire for expanded military capability.¹⁵⁰ However, in spite of the aforementioned developments, two important metrics remain unchanged, and continue to limit Japan’s capacity for military power.

¹⁴⁹ See Hughes, “Japan’s Strategic Trajectory and Collective Self-Defense.”

¹⁵⁰ See Cronin, “Japan-U.S. Cooperation on Ballistic Missile Defense: Issues and Prospects (CRS Report No. RL31337)”; Gady, “Japan to Convert Izumo-Class Into F-35-Carrying Aircraft Carrier”; Pitt, “The Meaning of Japan’s New Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade Launch.”

Perhaps most prominently is the continued lack of official amendment to Japanese constitution Article 9, which prohibits the maintenance of “war potential,” currently interpreted to mean a standing military (Self Defense Force excepted) and strategic weapons.¹⁵¹ Second, the Japanese defense budget has not significantly increased from its 1% of GDP starting point at the beginning of the period, thereby precluding the general growth of Japan’s armed forces.¹⁵²

The rising threat generated by external factors drove the trajectory vector of Japanese security policy over the period, while internal factors modulated the rate and degree of change. Of the external factors, threat generated by China and North Korea were the primary deciders of the trajectory’s vector, in accordance with Walt’s Balance of Threat Theory, while U.S. diplomacy was a secondary contributor and U.S. force presence reduced the balancing pressure of the other three threat factors.¹⁵³ At the same time, this paper also observed that there is a gap between the significant rise of external threats imposed upon Japan and the observed degree of balancing actions that Japan has taken to address those threats. The presence of certain powerful internal factors, namely antiwar norms and domestic suspicion of revisionists, appear to be sufficient to explain the observed gap in balancing behavior. However, internal factors did not uniformly resist the rate of policy change towards militarization. Factors such as single-party dominance and prime minister preferences sometimes supported the militarization trajectory over the observed period.

A qualitative assessment was made of the durability of the significant external and internal factors, to inform the level of confidence in extrapolating the observed past trajectory of security policy development out into the future. Broadly speaking, the significant factors that push Japanese policy towards further balancing and militarization are highly durable in both vector and degree of policy influence. The significant factors that resist further balancing and militarization are less durable in vector and/or degree. The

¹⁵¹ See Umeda, “Japan.”

¹⁵² World Bank, “Military Expenditure (% of GDP) – Japan | Data.”

¹⁵³ See Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power.”

two strongest internal factors that have slowed the rate and degree of militarization in the past are situationally malleable. First, the Japanese public's commitment to antiwar norms responds to increased external threat with decreased commitment to those norms.¹⁵⁴ If China and North Korea continue to grow increasingly threatening, it is assessed that a corresponding decrease in Japanese commitment to antiwar norms will probably be observed. Second, domestic suspicion of revisionists has only acted as a powerful braking mechanism against militarization because domestically unpopular revisionist ideology has historically been tied to militarization efforts. If a pro-militarization leader without the political baggage of a revisionist ideology, such as Suga, were to emerge and consolidate power, then opposition to militarization security policy development may be reduced.

With the above factors and their assessed durability in mind, this paper assesses that Japan's security policy is likely to remain on a restrained-rate trajectory towards further militarization so long as the underlying factors hold. Moreover, future volatility amongst the arrayed factors is most likely to further increase the rate, and possibly the degree, of militarization. If this assessment is correct, Japanese legal and material capability for use of force can be anticipated to expand for the foreseeable future.

¹⁵⁴ See Miyashita, "Where Do Norms Come From?"

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